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LD171402 [Editorial Report]

Iran-Iraq Conflict

Iranian Advance in North—Iranian forces advanced southwest of Khurmal 17 March, capturing the town of Dujaylah and approaching the eastern shore of Darband Khan reservoir, IRNA announced. The attackers also laid siege to the Iraqi military garrison at Halabjah and took control of "industrial plants" north of the town.

The agency claimed that 2,500 Iraqi soldiers were killed or wounded in these operations, and over 1,000 were taken prisoner, including a major general commanding an infantry division.

The latest phase of "Val-Fajr-10" brings the total number of Iraqi casualties in this offensive to 5,500, the agency added. IRNA also accused Iraq of dropping chemical bombs on residents in the Halabjah area, and Tehran radio likewise reported that Iraq has responded to the Iranian advance by adopting a "scorched earth" policy.

The radio also carried a statement by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeyni congratulating the Iranian forces on their advance and thanking residents of "liberated" Iraqi towns who "welcomed the fighters of Islam with open arms."

However, an Iraqi official cited by Voice of the Masses radio denied Iran's "baseless" reports about fighting in the Halabjah-Khurmal area, adding that Iraqi units have already "evacuated" these areas and "do not exist in them."

The official described the Iranian claims as an attempt to justify Iran's "crime of destroying the town and villages of Halabjah which were occupied and destroyed by the enemy units."

An Iraqi communique cited by the radio had earlier reported that Iraqi helicopters dealt "lethal strikes" to enemy troop columns in the northern sector. Meanwhile, the Iraqi defense minister inspected Iraqi units in the north to acquaint himself with measures to "crush any possible Iranian aggression on the invincible northern Iraqi border," INA reported.

Missile, Air Attacks—Iraq launched another missile at Tehran 17 March, and its warplanes carried out further strikes on Iranian cities the previous day, according to statements broadcast by Voice of the Masses.

The targets included Shiraz, Tabriz, Bakhtaran, and Shahpur. The Iraqi planes also raided oil installations in Bandar-e Mah Shahr and downed an Iranian helicopter.

For Iran's part, IRNA reported that twelve Iranian missiles were fired at Al-Zubayr 17 March, while Iranian aircraft bombed Iraqi targets in Dahuk Province and at the "Val-Fajr-10" front. Tehran radio reported an Iranian air strike on the Iraqi city of Kuysanjaq 17 March, and the raid was confirmed by INA.

Reporting on the casualties caused by Iraqi missile and air attacks 16 March, Tehran radio reported that 32 people were killed in the strikes on Tehran, Tabriz, Shiraz, and Bakhtaran; IRNA said 20 more were killed in Ilam.

Another 28 people were killed in further attacks on cities the morning of 17 March, the agency said. Casualties of Iranian attacks on Iraq 16 March included 2 killed and 23 wounded in an air raid in Irbil, and 4 dead and 10 wounded in artillery attacks on Al-Qurnah and Al-Zubayr, according to INA.

An Iraqi spokesman cited by Voice of the Masses stated that an Iranian plane was downed over Iraq, while INA carried statements denying Iranian claims to have shot down several Iraqi aircraft.

IRNA reports asserted that two Iraqi planes were downed 16 March, and that five more were shot down the following morning, four of them on the northern battlefront.

Lebanon

Israeli Air Strike—Israeli warplanes attacked and destroyed "terrorist targets" in the mountains south of Beirut, IDF radio announced 17 March.

According to Voice of Lebanon radio, "Fatah movement military posts" were located in the Shimlan, Baysur, and Qabr Shmun areas hit by the Israelis. The radio cited a PSP announcement that one man was killed and two wounded in the raid.

Syrian Visitors—Two senior Syrian military officials visited West Beirut 16 March, Beirut radio reported. The visitors were Defense Minister Mustafa Talas, who inspected Syrian military units, and Brigadier General Ghazi Kan'an, who sounded out the views of Muslim leaders on the latest reform plan submitted by the "regime" in East Beirut.

Syria will convey the response from West Beirut to the United States for handing over to President Amin al-Jumayyil, Kan'an noted. The Syrian official also viewed Al-Jumayyil's latest proposals on political reforms as "all-embracing" and referred to the regime's "seriousness" in carrying them out.

Southern Clash—Seven Hizballah "terrorists" were killed in a "fierce battle" with the SLA in the Jazzin area, Jerusalem radio reported. Nine other people were reportedly killed by SLA artillery fire.

Israel

Territories—Two more Arabs were killed during riots 16 March and a third person died in a Tulkarm hospital after being asphyxiated by tear gas, Jerusalem radio reported.

Twelve other people were injured during clashes with IDF soldiers in the West Bank and Gaza, according to Jerusalem and IDF radio reports. In East Jerusalem, police arrested nonviolence activist Mubarak 'Awwad for participating in an illegal assembly, IDF radio noted. He was later released after being charged with organizing the demonstration, Jerusalem radio disclosed.

In another administrative measure against the riots, the Israeli authorities have decided to limit the transfer of money across the Jordan River bridges in order to prevent an inflow of PLO money, Jerusalem radio reported.

For the PLO's part, PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat stated in a recent interview with Egypt's AL-WAFD that the next phase of the uprising will consist of campaigns of partial and full civil disobedience.

However, if these fail the PLO will consider using firearms inside the territories, though this depends on the stands taken by the Israeli military command and the "herds of fanatic armed settlers," he added.

Katyusha Attack—Several Katyusha rockets were fired into the Galilee 16 March but caused no casualties and little damage, Jerusalem radio announced. The 122-mm shells were fired from outside the security zone in southern Lebanon.

Shamir in Washington—Following his talks with President Reagan, Jerusalem radio broadcast remarks by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir in which he acknowledged that he cannot point to any changes in the Shultz plan, but added that he assumes his explanations are being weighed and discussed. Shamir said he had made a great effort to "guarantee" the continuation of friendly relations and cooperation with the United States, and he told the radio that "disagreement does not mean there is a conflict."

In Israel, Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres' office expressed "satisfaction" with Reagan's comments at the end of his meeting with Shamir, HA'ARETZ noted.

Arab Diplomacy

Saudi King Fahd and his guest, Jordanian King Husayn, held a "comprehensive exchange of opinions" on current issues of common concern, especially the Palestinian uprising and efforts to convene an international peace conference, Amman radio reported, adding that the two monarchs' views are "completely identical."

In a press statement reported by SPA, Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal said that the Kingdom had made a positive response to Algeria's call for an extraordinary Arab summit to discuss the situation in the occupied territories.

Saudi Arabia "always agrees" to attend such Arab consultations, the foreign minister declared. He noted that the matter of attendance at the proposed meeting was "not discussed collectively" at the recently concluded GCC foreign ministers meeting in Riyadh.

Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' told reporters in Paris that his country "endorsed" the summit call, according to remarks broadcast by Radio Monte Carlo. Al-Shar' reiterated his country's view that the uprising represents an "important turning point" which all Arabs are "dutybound to support."

According to Damascus television, Al-Shar' stressed that peace proposals should include provisions for an Israeli withdrawal from occupied Arab territory and for the achievement of the Palestinians' "complete rights." The U.S. plan is "unacceptable," Al-Shar' stated.

At the conclusion of his contacts in Paris, the Syrian foreign minister flew to Moscow to join the activities of the seven-member Arab League committee promoting support for the Palestinian cause, Damascus radio reported 17 March.

Libya

Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi and Ahmad al-Mirghani, chairman of the Sudanese State Council, held talks in Surt 15 March, SUNA reported, adding that Al-Qadhdhafi characterized the two sides viewpoints as "identical on all issues."

The Libyan leader also noted that he had decreed that Sudanese nationals be allowed to enter and tour Libya "without passport procedures."

In Tripoli, Colonel Abu Bakr Yunis Jabir, commander in chief of the Libyan Armed Forces, received Fleet Admiral Vladimir Chernavin, commander of the Soviet Navy, JANA reported.

Egypt-USSR

The Soviet Cultural Center in Cairo reopened after having been closed in 1977 on instruction of the late President Anwar al-Sadat, Moscow radio reported.

Butrus Ghali, minister of state for foreign affairs and chairman of the Egypt-USSR Friendship Society, said that the resumption of the center's work is a symbol of the "developing friendly relations" between the two countries, the station added.

Afghanistan

New Appointments—Mines and Industries Minister Najibullah Masir has been appointed "deputy prime minister in charge of the administration of the northern provinces," BAKHTAR reported. "Diplomats" cited by AFP observed that the creation of the new post "exacerbates fears of an attempt to partition Afghanistan."

PDPA Politburo member Nur Ahmad Nur left home to take up his position as ambassador to Poland, Kabul radio reported. In Moscow, the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet appointed Nikolay Yegorychev new Soviet ambassador to Afghanistan, TASS announced.

Italian Journalist Sentenced—Italian photojournalist Fausto Biloslavo received a 7-year prison sentence for "spying for a foreign power," Rome radio reported.

Palestinian Affairs

PLO's 'Arafat on U.S. Plan, Husayn Invitation

JN161124 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic
14 Mar 88 p 5

[Interview with PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat, identified by his nom de guerre Abu 'Ammar, by Ibrahim Yunus in Tunis; date not given]

[Text] [Yunus] What do you expect from U.S. Secretary of State Shultz' visits, especially the last one, and how far can you go with his recent plan?

['Arafat] Our peoples and kinfolk must understand the real meaning of Shultz' move. He is acting on orders from his boss, Reagan, and under pressure from the Jewish forces in the United States to save Israel from the present dilemma it is facing; namely, the Palestinian uprising and what it has done. Shultz is acting in accordance with Mr Reagan's old plan. He is trying to persuade certain Arab parties to approve it and thereby abort the uprising, or at least contain it, and then liquidate the Palestine question by various methods and under different names.

[Yunus] Explain, Abu 'Ammar.

['Arafat] I will explain the subject calmly. The Shultz plan says there must be a 6-month interim period during which Arab police or security forces would enter densely-populated areas in the West Bank and Gaza after the Israeli forces have left these areas. He did not mention withdrawal. He used the words "going away" [preceding two words published in English]. The Arab forces would carry out the role of policeman instead of the Israeli policemen and the Israeli army. At the same time, the proposal had to be made palatable to the Palestinian people so they raised the question of elections.

[Yunus] How would elections take place?

['Arafat] Some 25 to 50 Palestinians would be elected in municipal elections. Then, these representatives would select five to seven members to represent them in the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation which they are preparing. I would like to explain to our Arab people and kinfolk in Egypt and elsewhere that we reject elections under Israeli occupation. Our past experiences are the reasons for this.

[Yunus] Why, Abu 'Ammar?

['Arafat] We have had ample experience in the past. Municipal elections were held in the West Bank and Gaza in 1976. The PLO and other Palestinian nationalist elements got 96 percent of the votes. Do you know what happened to them?

[Yunus] What happened?

['Arafat] Woes befell them. Some were killed by the Zionists. Fahd al-Qawasimah was martyred. Others had their limbs chopped off like Bassam al-Shak'ah [former Nabulus mayor]. Others were deported like Muhammad Milhim [former mayor of Halhul]. Therefore, we reject elections under Israeli occupation. The elections would then be followed by a 3-year transitional period during which the Palestinians would be given crumbs under self-rule, which would be a joint Israeli-Arab rule not Arab-Palestinian rule.

[Yunus] Isn't this one of the current demands?

['Arafat] No, because after a few years there would be a ceremonious conference covering what had taken place.

[Yunus] How is that?

['Arafat] A session would be held and speeches would be made. Then, the conference would adjourn to be replaced by negotiations between Israel and the neighboring Arab states.

[Yunus] And what about the PLO, the representative of the Palestinian people?

['Arafat] According to the plan, the PLO is not represented and does not have a role at all. The whole matter is confined to the big powers and Israel's neighboring states. After the adjournment of the ceremonious opening session, the conference would break up into committees: Israeli-Jordanian, Israeli-Egyptian, Israeli-Lebanese, and Israeli-Syrian committees.

[Yunus] And Palestine?

['Arafat] Some Palestinians might attend within an Arab delegation, according to their viewpoint. The Palestine question would once again turn into a refugee issue as stated in Resolution 242. This is because the whole purpose is to contain and abort the uprising, which has strongly shaken international society and imposed the Palestinians' cause on the big powers. Thus, the Palestinian people would continue to be ruled by this misfit. Our people refuse to be enslaved.

[Yunus] So why did Faruq Qaddumi announce to the European press that the PLO is ready to sit with U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz?

['Arafat] We are willing to sit with Shultz since he represents a major world power. We are not against that. On the contrary, we are ready to sit together if they ask us and we will clearly state our opinion. We are not outbidders. We are not raising empty slogans. We consider the United States a major power, a superpower. At the same time, however, we will reject any conspiracies by this superpower against the future of our people and sons. We say if Shultz asks to meet with any Palestinian delegation designated by the PLO and no one else, we will welcome that.

[Yunus] I have learned that King Husayn has requested a meeting with you. What do you intend to do?

['Arafat] Indeed, I received a telephone call from Amman yesterday extending King Husayn's invitation. I told the brothers in Amman that I called an urgent meeting of the PLO Executive Committeed—because we do not make unilateral decisions—to discuss this subject. We will act in accordance with the committee's decision.

[Yunus] Have you not reached a decision concerning this invitation?

['Arafat] We are awaiting the arrival of the committee members who are still abroad. Then we will make our decision.

[Yunus] Can we consider the Palestinian uprising, as it is now, a rebirth of the PLO or the Palestinian revolution, which has taken the world by surprise?

['Arafat] It is a new phase in which the Palestinian people proved that they can assert their cause regardless of the circumstances and that this cause will not be shelved or forgotten. The uprising has put the cause on the agenda of the two superpowers, changed the political map of the region, and forced Reagan to send envoys to the region several times headed by his Secretary of State Shultz. The Palestinian people are not dead and will not die. They will continue to fight in defense of their right to life and freedom. The uprising is the most eloquent proof of that.

[Yunus] Could the uprising subside? I will not say end.

['Arafat] The uprising began on 24 October 1986 during the siege of the camps in Beirut. That was when we asked our kinfolk in the occupied territory to take action to reduce the pressure on their brothers who were under siege in the camps. Since then, the waves have followed one after the other with precision. The whole world has witnessed this and world leaders have been prompted to take action. The main thing is that the movement is escalating and expanding to include universities, schools, peasants, workers, university professors, merchants, workers, and even women and children.

The uprising has covered villages, towns, and camps in all parts of our occupied territory. The most important thing is that the uprising has also spread to those who have lived under the occupation since 1948; those whom Israel calls Israeli Arabs. Their action proves their deep sense of belonging to their Palestinian origin. They have not forgotten and they will not forget their homeland. This is what has scared Israel.

[Yunus] Are the channels of contact open between the PLO and the Palestinians in the occupied territory, because, unfortunately, some writers are trying to underestimate this contact?

['Arafat] Such talk would have found some ears in the past. But now it is clear to everyone there is a strong relationship between the leadership and the base inside the occupied territory. Are the statements, appeals, and leaflets not sufficient proof that the people see eye to eye with the revolutionary leadership?

This is not mere talk. To the Palestinian people, the PLO means three important things: identity after attempts have been made to deprive Palestinians of their national identity; dignity after attempts have been made for years to trample on Palestinian dignity; and a future after attempts have been made to deprive the Palestinians of a future. These three inseparable things make up the PLO which embodies these meanings and is fighting for them.

You know, of course, that many attempts were made to split the Palestinian people among Palestinians living inside Israel since 1948, those living in the West Bank and Gaza, as well as those in the diaspora whether in Algeria, Yemen, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, or anywhere in the Arab world. But we are not Red Indians who must be liquidated. We are proud of our Muslim revolution just as we are proud of our civil resistance and scientific revolution. Do not be surprised if I tell you that despite our destitution we have the highest ratio of educated people. We have surpassed Israel itself and we are second only to the Egyptians in the number of educated people in the region. This is known to everyone.

Our people in the occupied territory have remained steadfast against the invaders. This steadfastness has been recorded by all world television stations. These stations also heard our people's appeal: "PLO Israeli No" [preceding three words in English].

When Shultz came to the region, we asked our kinfolk not to meet him as a reply to the closure of the PLO office in Washington and also because he wanted to deal only with a certain sector of our people. And this was what had happened.

The issue, my brother, is that Shultz and the U.S. Administration with all of its science and computer systems have remained incapable of understanding the firmness and strength of character of our people and our Arab nation. And this is not something new for these forces. The British colonialists were unable to understand the nature of the Egyptian people, who began to fight by using stones and staging strikes for 6 months in the 1919 revolution. These colonialists closed stores.

During those days, Egypt turned into a revolutionary torch that lit the whole region. Many of the world's states benefited from this experience. This revolution was a great thing in the history of the reigon's peoples.

Nobody in the world entertained the idea that the unarmed Egyptian people would choose to fight Great Britain, which had turned victorious at the end of the

war. They—namely, the big powers and Israel—cannot understand the way people develop and initiate things and processes. Therefore, they cannot understand our movement either in the short or long run. In contrast, our people have recognized Israel's weakness.

Military operations are continuing, and they will not stop there [in the occupied territories]. As for the uprising, we have decided not to use weapons in it. Our decision has so far been to intensify military operations in places outside areas where the uprising is being staged, namely, in southern Lebanon and other areas.

[Yunus] Will the uprising remain the way it is right now?

['Arafat] No, development is inevitable. We are going through phases. We have finished the first and second phases of the uprising. We still have to go through the third and fourth phases.

[Yunus] What are these third and fourth phases?

['Arafat] Half of a civil disobedience campaign and a full civil disobedience campaign.

[Yunus] What, then, if all this fails to achieve what you want it to?

['Arafat] Then, we will think of using firearms inside the occupied territories, and we are ready for this. However, every phase has a role to play. When one phase ends, we start with the next one. Launching the phase of using firearms is contingent on the stands taken by the Israeli military command and the herds of fanatic armed settlers in Gaza. We are ready to make a decision in this regard right now, at this very moment. However, such a decision is dictated by circumstances.

[Yunus] Is it not high time to unify all political organizations within the PLO?

['Arafat] We do not have any problem with different political organizations because of our exercise of democracy, the democracy of the revolution. I am not personally bothered when someone differs with me or opposes me. The prophets Muhammad, Jesus, and Moses, may God's peace be upon them, were faced with people who differed with them or stood against them. If this happens to prophets, then it is inevitable for it to happen to fallible human beings. Anyway, there is always dialogue and the opinion voiced by the majority governs our stands.

[Yunus] Abu 'Ammar, what do you ask of the Egyptian Arab people?

['Arafat] I ask the Egyptian Arab people to protect the uprising. I voice my support for all that is taking place in the Egyptian arena. And Palestine has always been Egypt's right flank. All students studying at Egyptian military academies are taught and know that Palestine is Egypt's right shield and that all Egyptian victories throughout history have been scored in Palestine. History also says Egypt occupied its prominent position in the Arab and Islamic worlds because of the roles it has played in Palestine.

I myself say that supporting Palestine, defending it, and protecting its revolution is Egypt's historical, geographic, pan-Arab, and moral role. It is a political responsibility shouldered by Egypt toward sisterly Palestine, toward the Palestinian people, and the Palestine question. A lot is required of Egypt. They cannot undermine us if Egypt says no and I am sure of this.

[Yunus] What about your relationship with President Mubarak?

['Arafat] God be praised, there is coordination between us. He voices the opinions he deems appropriate and sound and we do the same in an atmosphere of fraternity and affection. Finally, I voice my thanks to you, as you exhausted yourself to make the journey to this place. I also extend my thanks to the newspaper AL-WAFD and also to its editor in chief, Brother Mustafa Shardi. I would like to also thank Brother Fu'ad Siraj al-Din, the Al-Wafd Party, and the entire Egyptian people for the stands they have taken to support us.

[Yunus] We support you, Abu 'Ammar. We support the uprising and all peoples who defend their rights.

'Arafat Discusses Mideast With Soviet Envoy

LD162125 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Last night in Tunis, brother leader Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] discussed with a Soviet envoy the latest developments in the Middle East and the political contacts and movements in the region. During the meeting they also discussed all aspects of the situation, from the Palestinian, Arab, and international points of view, in light of the heroic uprising in the occupied territories, which is continuing now for more than 3 months in the face of the Zionist occupation.

During the meeting they stressed the importance of solving the Palestinian problem in a just and comprehensive way through an authoritative international conference, which should be held under UN auspices and with the participation of the permanent members of the UN Security Council and all the concerned parties, including the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

PLO Radio on Palestinian-Jordanian Relations

JN162038 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1713 GMT 16 Mar 88

["Article" by political editor: "We, Jordan, and the Only Option"]

[Text] Everybody now clearly realizes that all the cards of the regional political game are on the table and there is no longer any possibility for other cards to come from here and there. [passage indistinct]

The second point is that everybody now realizes that Palestine, the Palestinian people, and the Palestinian land and its political future, as well as the PLO under Yasir 'Arafat, are the primary and most basic issue and that everything else is a just ramification or detail on which understanding can be reached within the context of the principal cause—Palestine—with the Palestinian people's sole and legitimate representative. This shows we must not pause at the attempts at representation being made here and there.

The third point is that any party that wants to settle a problem that concerns it has no choice but to reach an understanding with the centre of the conflict, the PLO. By any party, we mean local, regional, and international. Thus, it should be understood that neither the road to Washington, nor any documents that are signed or may be signed in this or that capital or in this or that European country, can lead anywhere or be of any use, even on the level of personal interests.

From the premise of these rules, we say the following: With respect to the present and future relationship between Palestine and Jordan, between the PLO and the Hahshemite Kingdom of Jordan: First, no one ignores that Palestine and Jordan are one social, economic, and politicial unit. Also no one ignores that this unit is the most qualified to form now or in the future a state of real unity that will be a model to be copied in the region.

Second, no one ignores that Palestine has the central role in the entire region. This will have its impact on the relationship between Palestine and Jordan. This applies even if some still consider, or could consider, that Palestine is as yet a project, an idea, or a dream. Even if this is the case, it cannot cancel the afrorementioned positive rule.

Third, Palestine does not fear real unity on realistic bases. Therefore, we find it strange that other parties fear this real unity out of the apprehension that Palestine may overpower the roles of others because Palestine originally has more than it needs.

Therefore, on the basis of this alone, one can reach formulas for understanding, as the problem does not lie in the issue of a federation or a confederation between Palestine and Jordan. The problem also does not lie in the issue of a joint delegation or two independent delegations. The problem is for all the parties to be aware of the size of every party and its role and not to try the impossible or the futile. Futility will only lead to futility.

The PLO is capable of reaching an understanding and an agreement with any party. It is also capable of signing an overt agreement and in broad daylight with any party. What is needed is for this party to demonstrate the same clarity, announce what it wants, and say what it wants. Therefore, the other doors do not lead anywhere. The door to Palestine is the only option. All others are futile attempts and will absolutely not serve any party.

OPEC Affairs

OPEC Sees Greater Role in Setting Oil Prices

LD151610 Vienna OPECNA in English 1126 GMT 15 Mar 88

[By 'Ali al-Khazraji]

[Text] Baghdad 15 Mar. 88 (OPECNA)—OPEC is destined to play a greater role in setting the pace of oil price developments because it enjoys the lowest production costs and possesses the bulk of the world's proven oil reserves.

According to a paper delivered on behalf of the Vienna-based organization today at the fourth Arab Energy Conference by Dr. Ja'far Mansur Sa'd, acting director of research at the OPEC secretariat, the next two or three years should prove crucial in determining the position of OPEC vis-a-vis the rest of the world.

He said the organization would most likely adhere to its original policy guidelines as far as prices were concerned, namely the achievements of a price level commensurate with its combined production capacity and reserves, the protection of the per barrel purchasing power of export revenues, and the use of pricing and production as a means of bringing about a radical change in the structure of international economic relations.

The OPEC official pointed out that as 1987 had shown, OPEC was indeed determined to implement its fixed price policy which since the beginning of last year had been anchored to a reference price of 18 dollars a barrel.

The ultimate success and institutionalization of this policy, with possible future price revisions, would depend—at least in the short run—on the extent to which all non-OPEC producers were willing to cooperate with OPEC in shouldering part of the burden of price defence and maintaining market stability, he noted.

Towards this end, he said, OPEC had decided to reactivate contacts with other producers to ensure cooperation along concrete and unambiguous lines.

"It is not fair that the 13 developing countries of OPEC should be expected to suffer increasing economic difficulties and financial losses simply to ensure higher revenues for fully developed and vastly richer oil producers."

He added that even among the developing oil exporting countries, the majority enjoyed higher living standards and per capita incomes than many OPEC members.

OPEC, he said, continued to be concerned about such factors as the instability of the dollar, the development of alternative sources of energy and the eroding effects of substitution and energy conservation. In addition, a more pressing problem had been added—the attitude of non-OPEC producers.

Referring to the present situation in the oil market, the speaker pointed out that the other major actors in the oil market, such as oil companies, the United States and the North Sea producers, were fully aware of the catastrophic results of a price collapse and would reconsider their previous positions vis-a-vis oil prices and OPEC.

He argued that the 1986 price collapse was not the result of a price war as portrayed by the Western news media, but the logical outcome of difficulties largely beyond OPEC's control and the "hypocritical insistence of the proponents of free market ideology that oil prices, supply and demand should be left to be determined by the so-called market forces".

He said a depletable asset like oil could not be priced on the basis of its cost of production and in the same manner as reproducible goods and services.

Notwithstanding the difficulties currently facing OPEC, the achievements of the organization over a relatively short period of time underscored the ability of developing countries to act as a united group to secure full control over their valuable economic resources.

Their collective economic interests had been served through unity, although it was recognized that there was diversity among their political systems and they had divergent visions of economic development and strategies.

Sa'd said the success of OPEC constituted "the most significant milestone towards true economic independence for developing countries as a whole."

He said it was only in this context that OPEC policies on production and prices should be evaluated.

The speaker also reviewed the history of OPEC, from its establishment here in September 1960 by Iraq, Iran, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Venezuela to its consolidation and growth over the years.

South Asian Regional Affairs

Further Reports on Geneva Talks on Afghanistan

Noorani Clarifies Stand

BK170603 Islamabad Domestic Serice in Urdu 0200 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Zain Noorani has said the Government of Pakistan has evolved a clear and open policy to sign the proposed agreements on Afghanistan as soon as the issues yet to be resolved are settled in a satisfactory manner and its legitimate concerns have been overcome.

He told a news conference in Geneva last night that Pakistan does not want even a day's delay in the withdrawal of Soviet troops. We would like the withdrawal of Soviet troops to begin immediately.

He said in Pakistan's view, the differences in the draft of the Geneva agreement can be solved, provided all parties at the talks adopt an attitude of understanding and flexibility and adopt the basic logic of a comprehensive settlement in connection with the points still to be settled.

Zain Noorani made it clear that the international agreements will prove to be effective only when they are based on the principles of justice and all the parties execute them.

In this connection, a balance and equality should be created in the responsibilities of Pakistan and the Kabul administration, and the Soviet Union and the United States.

He stressed the need to put an end to interference in Afghanistan from all sides since peace can only be established in this way. The principle of noninterference also provides for the non-supply of weapons for creating disorder and chaos in any country.

He said continuing the supply of foreign arms to one party in Afghanistan and stopping it to another would be against the principles.

Zain Noorani made it clear that the Kabul administration maintains control over only a small area in Afghanistan and the mujahidin have liberated about 80 percent of the country.

As far as Pakistan is concerned, the establishment of an interim government in Afghanistan is essential in order to prevent the continuing bloodshed and to implement the proposed Geneva agreement in a cordial manner.

Pakistan has not submitted the proposal for setting up an interim government as a precondition to signing the agreement, but it is among those things over which Pakistan is concerned and it wants satisfaction in this regard.

Referring to the statements of the the Kabul administration's foreign minister on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, he said if he has not attempted to mar the process of the Geneva proximity talks by raising an irrelevant issue, he has at the very least attempted to distract attention.

He made it clear that Pakistan has never raised any question on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. He said we have no territorial claim on Afghanistan and we do not recognize any border dispute between the two countries.

The minister of state recalled that Pakistan had not, in any round of the proximity talks, proposed any change in the preparation of the drafts, which call upon both parties to desist from violating the internationally recognized borders between the two countries.

Radio Pakistan's special representative, Safdar Ahad, who is in Geneva to cover the proximity talks, has reported that Zain Noorani made it clear that he is prepared to stay in Geneva until an agreement is finalized.

When asked whether the forthcoming talks between the foreign ministers of the Soviet Union and the United States would help in overcoming the current situation, Zain Noorani said as far as the equality in responsibilities is concerned, it may be easy for the two superpowers, who will guarantee the implementation of the agreement, to solve this issue together.

In reply to another question, he said the issue of setting up an interim government has been discussed several times in the past 18 months. This matter was also discussed during the Pakistani foreign minister's visit to Moscow in 1987, and hence it is not a new problem.

Seeks Comprehensive Accord

BK161126 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Pakistan would be ready to sign the Geneva accord as and when the instruments are completed. The minister of state for foreign affairs, Mr Zain Noorani, told newsmen before the start of proximity talks [in Geneva] today that before signing the agreement, Pakistan's concern on some important issues would have to be recognized.

Pakistan, he added, wanted to have a comprehensive agreement, and not a (?partial) agreement which could not be implemented. He said that the whole world wants the agreement to be comprehensive.

Pakistan Creating 'Obstacles'

LD161800 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Talks between Afghanistan and Pakistan through D. Cordovez, special representative of the UN secretary general, continued today in Geneva.

Afghanistan Foreign Affairs Minister 'Abdul Wakil said today in Geneva at a press conference that the Pakistani side is continuing to create artificial obstacles which disrupt the successful conclusion of the Geneva talks.

Algeria

Bendjedid Receives Jordanian Envoy, Message

LD161244 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Chadli Bendjedid, president of the Republic and secretary of the FLN, received this morning at the presidential office 'Adnan Abu 'Awdah, minister at the royal palace and special envoy of King Husayn of Jordan.

After the audience, Abu 'Awdah made a statement to a radio correspondent in which he said:

[Begin recording] I have conveyed a message from His Majesty King Husayn to His Excellency President Chadli Bendjedid concerning the political developments in the region in the aftermath of the Palestinian people's uprising against the occupation.

The message stems from King Husayn's eagerness to continue coordination and consultation with his brothers the Arab leaders, and out of his belief that his brothers share his conviction on the importance of joint Arab action based on a joint and united perception. [end recording]

The message was comprehensive and His Excellency President Chadli Bendjedid thanked his majesty the king for this initiative and assessed it highly in view of the explanations and Jordan's firm position of commitment to the overall Arab position as outlined in the message.

Further on Visit by Palestinian Leaders

Abu Sharif Comments

LD151646 Algiers APS in English 1040 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Algiers, 15/3/88 (APS)—Several meetings gathered here PLO Executive Committee President Yasir 'Arafat, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine Secretary General Nayif Hawatimah and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine George Habash, in presence of Abu al-'Izz PLO representative and 'Arafat adviser's in information Yasir 'Arafat Bassam Abu Sharif. [sentence as received]

In a statement to APS, Abu Sharif stated that these meetings deal with the evolution of the situation in the occupied territories and means to reinforce the Zionist occupier for the achievement of the national objective, i.e. full independence.

They also deal, he added with PLO political initiatives at the Arab and international levels.

Bassam also stated that PLO and Algeria are working for the convening of an extraordinary summit.

The programme of this 12 summit includes notably: "The action of PLO and the Arab committee of the seven on the international plan to face the American administrative plot. This plot aims at checking the popular uprising in the occupied Palestinian territories."

"The American decision to close PLO mission in the UN is the price paid to Shamir before his visit to Washington," Abu Sharif added.

Abu Sharif concluded affirming that the Palestinian national decision is in our popular struggle will be carried on until the end of the occupation and the recovery by the Palestinian people of their right to self-determination and national independence as the Algerian people did it in December 1961 against the French occupant. [sentence as received]

'Arafat Concludes Visit

LD161829 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Brother leader Abu Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], chairman of the PLO Executive Committee and commander in chief of the Palestinian Revolution Forces, concluded his 4-day working visit to Algeria, which started at the beginning of this week.

During the visit, accompanied by Brothers Habash and Hawatimah, he met Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid and a number of senior Algerian party and state officials.

In a statement before leaving Algeria, brother leader Abu Ammar described this visit as very successful.

During this visit brother leader Abu Ammar, accompanied by brothers Habash and Hawatimah, met Malian President Moussa Traore.

During the meeting they discussed the latest developments in the occupied homeland in light of the escalation of the popular Palestinian uprising in the occupied Palestinian West Bank and Gaza Strip, in the face of the Zionist oppression, injustice, and terrorism.

Chad

Habre Receives Western Armed Forces Delegation

AB162219 Ndjamena Domestic Service in French 1845 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Excerpt] Late this morning President of the Republic El Hadj Hissein Habre received in audience a delegation of the Western Armed Forces. The delegation was led by (Keri Mayina Akonou).

The talks between the head of state and the delegation centered basically on national reconciliation. Let us listen to (Mayina Akonou) speaking to our reporter Mahamat Ahmat Adam:

[Begin recording] [(Akonou)] (?I would like to say) that we are one of the factions [words indistinct] we have come here in Ndjamena [passage indistinct] by the Western Armed Forces, which had decided to send us to Ndjamena and to (?rally) to the Government of the Third Republic.

Our trip here is part of efforts at national reconciliation, which has often been preached by His Excellency Hissein Habre to all Chadians without exception, including those who are still living in foreign lands.

It is within this context that the Western Armed Forces decided to break away from the rest of the opposition factions and join the Government of the Third Republic.

[Adam] You have just held discussions with the president of the Republic. May we know what you discussed?

[(Akonou)] We expressed to the president our faction's unflinching support for the government and also informed him about our faction's decision.

We also expressed the wish to see the president continue his appeal to those who are still living abroad. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Egypt

Al-Baz Discusses Relations With Arabs, Israel

PM170841 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 7 Mar 88 pp 7, 17

[Interview with Dr Usamah al-Baz, first under secretary of the Foreign Ministry and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs, by Dr 'Abd al-Hamid al-Muwafi; place, date not given]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] [Al-Muwafi] Events and developments in the region stress the need for work to activate the Joint Arab Defense Pact concluded among the Arab states—something that is known to be difficult to achieve without an effective Egyptian contribution.

The urgent question revolves around what is being reported, namely, the contradiction between Egyptian commitment to this pact and commitments subsequent to the peace agreement with Israel. So, what is the extent of this contradiction?

[Al-Baz] First of all, there is no contradiction at all between our commitments to the Joint Arab Defense Pact, signed on 13 April 1950, and any other agreements we have concluded since that date, especially the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel.

Every state has rights and commitments toward other states and various international groups. These commitments cannot be canceled and these rights cannot be affected as a result of the state's relationship with a third party.

We, together with the Arab world, consider ourselves to be in a very special circle, since Egyptian national security corresponds fully to pan-Arab security. Therefore, it is logical to see from an Arab angle such a special relationship and distinct approach toward issues concerning Egyptian national security.

As for Israel, this kind of relationship does not exist at all. What happened was that we began a peace process with it on the basis of this being a link in a successive series of links. At an early stage of the negotiations Israel tried to claim that Egyptian commitments under the treaty should have precedence over all other agreements. We considered this idea to be contradictory to the rules of international law and international relations.

This is because my relationship with Israel is not the general framework that will determine my relations with other states. I have a certain commitment toward Israel provided that it, in turn, adheres to certain commitments. However, this by no means negates the fact that I have commitments toward other parties with whom my relations differ from those with Israel. My relations with the Arab states differ, both in terms of quality and quantity, from my relations with Israel or any other party.

We consider that our main commitment emanates from the Arab League Charter, the Joint Arab Defense Pact, and the Arab common market agreement. Let us assume that Israel has attacked an Arab state: Egypt has the right to support that state with all means, including the use of armed force. This is a right Egypt cannot be denied. We explained this to both the Israelis and the Americans, because no state would forfeit its right of legitimate self-defense. And Egypt's self-defense is not confined to its borders, since we consider that Egyptian security extends to all Arab states.

So, if an Arab state is threatened, be it the Arab Maghreb region, the Gulf region, or the region that used to be called the Fertile Crescent, Egypt will have the right to immediately back that Arab state being attacked, regardless of the source of aggression, be it Israel or anybody else. [passage omitted]

[Al-Muwafi] His Excellency President Muhammad Husni Mubarak recently indicated that Camp David was outmoded. And you indicated previously that Camp David was a phase that had ended. What is the effect of this on Egyptian-Israeli relations, both at present and in the future? And could this constitute a basis for a new phase in Egyptian-Arab relations that would secure elements required for Arab solidarity?

[Al-Baz] Our position toward Camp David or anything else is a principled position emanating from a pan-Arab belief. It is not a position taken up to satisfy any quarter in particular. It is a position stemming from Arab interests, since we believe that we have a historic responsibility and it is both dangerous and wrong to abandon it.

The fact is that Egypt has never intended and does not intend at all to establish a particular relationship with Israel that would keep it away from the Arab position confronting Israel. We began a peace process with Israel—which we did not devise.

It was all the Arab parties confronting Israel which chose that road, the road to peace, because they accepted by endorsement Security Council Resolution 242, which provides for establishing comprehensive peace between Arab parties and Israel, according to certain conditions. So the Arab parties to the conflict had chosen to try the road of peace and give it a chance and to see how Israel would behave during the phase of peace.

With regard to commitment, the agreement did not go beyond a particular commitment, since Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and later the Palestinians had agreed to enter into a relationship of peace with Israel in return for Arab territories, the restoration of Arab sovereignty over all territories occupied since June 1967, respect for each party's rights to sovereignty and territorial integrity, and respect for the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people, foremost among which was their right to self-determination.

What Egypt had done was no invention; it was an experiment aimed at beginning to implement the policy they had actually decided on. If you look at the Fes resolutions, you will find that the Arabs preferred to choose peace with Israel; resolutions adopted by the Amman summit add new emphasis to this. In fact, the Amman resolutions portrayed peace as the only option available to the Arab nation at this stage.

We believe that the agreements signed at Camp David have served their purpose with regard to the initiation of an experiment to establish peace between the Arab states and Israel. [passage omitted]

As for the part concerning the Palestinian problem within the framework of peace in the Middle East, which was signed at Camp David, it has become inoperative, since Israel has rendered it devoid of content via its practices in the occupied territories, namely the repressive measures to which it has resorted. It destroyed the climate that could have led to negotiations on a peaceful settlement by annexing Arab Jerusalem to Israel; annexing the Golan to Israel; attacking Arab parties; its attack against a peaceful civilian reactor in Iraq; and its invasion of Lebanon.

Besides, Israel resorted to procrastination and hampered negotiations relating to an autonomy, thus annulling the Camp David formula in this regard. So Egypt has never been reluctant to declare that such a formula is obsolete, as events have overtaken it and Egypt is no longer committed to it. What is more important is that Egypt has clearly explained a point that was not clear to many of the Arab brothers, namely that Egypt cannot impose a particular settlement or solution on the Palestinian people, since they have freedom of choice and freedom of will. Our role is to support whatever the Palestinian people decide in this regard. [passage omitted]

[Al-Muwafi] Was Shultz' recent tour not an attempt in one way or another to revive this aspect of the agreement?

[Al-Baz] We cannot determine intentions through intuition or speculation. But it is clear that during his recent U.S. visit last 28 January, President Mubarak pointed out to both President Reagan and his aides that it would not be appropriate to think of reviving the Camp David formula, since it had been killed, and it was Israel which killed it; that it is much too difficult to revive; and that any attempt to revive it would be a waste of time, since this would worsen the situation and hamper the convening of an international conference.

We said that Egypt, Jordan, the PLO, and Syria reject this formula and we would not negotiate on the basis of such a formula. Therefore, the United States must make a move and work toward urging Israel to agree to the convening of an international conference, on the grounds that we have unanimously agreed that convening an international conference is the more suitable formula for shaping peace efforts. As to whether the United States is seeking to revive the Camp David formula, they told us frankly that it is not and that it has accepted the principle of convening an international conference, which is not stipulated in the Camp David agreement—it is a different formula.

They have also accepted the principle of negotiations being held only with an active and principal participation on the part of the representatives of the Palestinian people—which is a new position. They accepted the principle of holding expanded talks about a final settlement of the Palestinian problem before entering into any negotiations. They also agreed to shorten the period set for negotiations concerning a transitional stage: The Camp David agreement sets a term of years, whereas the United States is now convinced that negotiations concerning a transitional phase in the occupied territories—the West Bank and Gaza—can be completed over a period of 6 months.

The United States has also agreed to discuss a legal basis for negotiations within the framework of an international conference. They accepted that the basis should be the Security Council's two resolutions, 242 and 338, and added to them a stipulation concerning a settlement of the Palestinian problem in all its aspects, in order to endorse the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people. The United States has accepted all these considerations.

There is an urgent question: Will the United States fulfill our aspirations and expectations in this regard by proposing to the parties a new formula different from that of

Camp David—a formula that would lead to a comprehensive and just peaceful settlement? If the United States does that, we will encourage it and give it the opportunity to embark on an effective new contribution, after being absent and at a standstill for years with regard to the Middle East problem and after trying the Israeli approach: that time would solve the problem, or else it must be accepted that the problem had not matured, the parties' stands were still in disagreement, and there was no possibility of working seriously toward a settlement.

We want a true and fundamental change in the U.S. stand because the United States, as a major country, has both interests and responsibilities in the region and certainly should not just support Israel, right or wrong; nor should it adopt deviationist Israeli stands in a blind way that does not take into consideration new facts in the region.

If the United States eventually offers something weak and outside this context and concept—in submission to Israeli pressure or because of confusion and lack of a clear vision—we will not be obliged to accept the U.S. offer. What the United States proposes is something ordinary and transient, just like what any other state proposes. The question of accepting or rejecting it depends on our assessment of pan-Arab interests. If pan-Arab interests dictate that we try to accept a U.S. offer, we would do so. If pan-Arab interests dictate that it should be rejected, we would certainly not hesitate to reject it.

The United States has no influence on Egyptian or Arab decisionmaking. Praise be to God, there is at present a great deal of solidarity among Egypt, Jordan, and the PLO. Jordan is coordinating with Syria and we are making contacts with the Lebanese. So there are signs of making the Arab position more united in the face of other parties.

[Al-Muwafi] It is known that Egypt has played a vital role in support of Iraq at a time when it stresses its eagerness to work for an end to the Iraq-Iran war. Are there any Egyptian moves or coordination with the GCC states for this purpose? And how far can Egyptian efforts go in this regard, especially in view of what Cairo has emphasized, namely, that Gulf security is an integral part of Egyptian national security?

[Al-Baz] True, we have declared that and we still adhere to it. This is because we view Egyptian national security comprehensively. We can by no means cocoon ourselves and say that Egyptian national security begins and ends within Egyptian borders. Egyptian national security is influenced by what happens in any other Arab state. What is happening in the Gulf in particular has a direct impact on Egyptian national security. Thus, we have been interested in two things: first, confronting the Iraq-Iran war, that is, working toward ending it. This is because we see this war as a threat to the interests of all states in the region, not just those of the Gulf states. It is threatening Iranian interests, Iraqi interests, and also the interests of the Arabian peninsula states. It is also threatening our interests in many ways: First, it exhausts our potential and military force to no benefit. Second, it poses a threat in terms of creating potential for new conflicts in the region between the Arabs and the Iranians or between the Persians and the Arabs, between the Sunnis and Shi'ites—which could result in terrible consequences. The war also opens the door to destructive foreign interference that does not care about the interests and rights of the Arabs, since the aim is to achieve objectives for foreign parties. The war is exhausting the Gulf states and their resources.

The psychological effect of this war has been feelings of instability and insecurity in the region as well as concern, fear, and uncertainty about the future. We must deal with these considerations both seriously and actively. That is why Egypt has made moves in support of fraternal Iraq, because it has withdrawn from Iranian territories and expressed its complete readiness to stop the war in all its forms. It is the Iranian brothers' turn to respond. We tell them that we do not view the issue on the basis of prejudice or racism against Iran, since this would revive the conflict between the Persians and the Arabs.

Nor do we view it on a sectarian basis that would kindle sedition between the Sunnis and Shi'ites. We believe that there are more factors of unity and agreement, rather than disagreement and contradiction, between us and the fraternal Iranian people. Therefore, we will not give up calling on the brothers in Iran to respond to the voice of reason so that we will together be able to reach a formula under which an end to this war can be secured. This is the main objective: to end the war. Iran must understand that it is its responsibility and duty to agree to coexist with all Arab states without interfering in their affairs or trying to impose on them certain options, since these are futile policies.

Thus it was our duty to side with Iraq, which is fighting within Iraqi borders and constantly and unconditionally expresses its readiness to halt the war. One cannot request Iraq to adopt a stand other than this. [passage omitted]

[Al-Muwafi] When will President Mubarak visit Tunisia?

[Al-Baz] President Muhammad Husni Mubarak intends to visit Tunisia in the near future. We would also welcome President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali's visiting Egypt at any time. This is because, as I have said, we are totally in favor of the friendship between Egypt and Tunisia and are proud of the pan-Arab role being played by Tunisia. Setting an exact date for the visit depends on the program of engagements with regard to the leaderships in both countries. However, there is complete understanding that a visit should be made as soon as possible. [passage omitted]

[Al-Muwafi] Israel has tried to portray the normalization of Egyptian-Israeli relations as an important sign of Egypt's commitment to the peace treaty. To what extent do Israeli repressive acts in the occupied territories constitute violations of Israeli commitments under the agreement with Egypt? And how does Egypt view what happened to the Palestinian return ship and Israel's role in sabotaging it, especially in view of the fact that it was planned for the ship to call at an Egyptian port?

[Al-Baz] There is nothing called normalization between Egypt and Israel. There is a treaty that Egypt signed on the basis that it was part of a comprehensive peace into which Israel would be committed to enter, together with all Arab parties, with the Palestinian people in the forefront. There is no special relationship between Egypt and Israel. There is a beginning in terms of establishing a peace model between Israel and the Arab states. Israel is now facing a test and a challenge. As to whether or not it will pass this test, this is a question still being discussed and examined by many parties.

When Israel violates its commitments, whether under the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty or within the framework of peace in the Middle East, Egypt confronts such violations in both an appropriate and a balanced way. Egypt's response to Israeli violations must be well-determined and proportional to the violation.

What happened recently is that the Palestinian people launched an uprising, which met with world admiration, to declare their rejection of Israeli occupation as well as their determination to exercise their right to self-determination and the right to liberate their land. This right is natural for the Palestinian people—the right to resist, a legitimate right which everyone must approve, as it has been approved for states living under foreign occupation over the centuries. Israel will be held responsible not only by Egypt but by the international community as a whole for the violations it has committed, which have already been condemned.

I believe that light must be thrown on Israeli policy and its effects inside Israeli society itself. What is happening now in Israel is the beginning of something that could cause deterioration, as a result of the foolish policy pursued by the Israeli Government in dealing with the Palestinian people's revolution against the continued occupation.

Part of the punishment for such violations will come from Egypt and the other part will be from within Israel itself. This is because many categories of the Israeli people cannot possibly agree with all this; otherwise, it would mean that the Israeli people have chosen to be a people who abandon human concepts and contradict themselves, at the same time as they attack the practices Nazi Germany resorted to in dealing with the Jewish people and other peoples which were living under suppression at that time.

The Israeli people say that they are a Jewish people in terms of heritage and concepts. The Jewish people are supposed to be sensitive when it comes to suffering and oppression because they experienced a great deal of this throughout their history. [passage omitted]

Western Jewish communities fear that Israel's policies and attitudes could lead to more feelings of hostility against these communities, and could also revive the image of Jews as being a hostile people who abandon human concepts and accept operations of repression, torture, and bloodshed. All these questions are very important, and we believe that the Israelis must bear in mind that if Israel continues to pursue this policy, it will pay the price at all levels, including its relations with Egypt.

Jordanian Foreign Minister Arrives for Visit

NC162140 Cairo MENA in English 2125 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Cairo, March 16 (MENA)—Jordanian Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri arrived here tonight on a few days' visit to Egypt.

He was welcomed at the airport by Assistant Foreign Minister Wafa Hijazi and members of the Jordanian Embassy.

Makes Statement, Departs

NC170803 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0730 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Cairo, 17 Mar (MENA)—Jordanian Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri left Cairo for home this morning.

In a predeparture statement, Al-Masri said that preparations for the Islamic foreign minister's conference, which is due to begin in Amman on Monday, have been concluded, and that delegations taking part in it will arrive soon. He added that the 5-day conference takes on particular importance in light of recent developments in the region and in relations between Islamic countries. [passage omitted]

Referring to the Islamic world's stand on the Palestinian uprising, Al-Masri asserted that the countries of the Islamic world are taking a clear and solid position and are giving their support to the uprising. He pointed out that the uprising needs two kinds of support: moral support, which the Arab and Islamic countries are aready giving; and financial support, which he hopes will be increased in the near future. [passage omitted]

Further Reportage on UAE President's Visit

Tours Factory, Comments

NC161443 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Today, President Husni Mubarak and UAE President Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan visited the Saqr Factory for Advanced Industries, one of the Arab Industrialization Organization plants. The president and his guest were met upon arrival by Field Marshal 'Abd al-Halim Abu Ghazalah, minister of defense and war production; Lieutenant General Ibrahim al-'Urabi, chairman of the Arab Industrialization Organization; Dr Jamal al-Sayyid, minister of state for war production; and Dr Ahmad Fu'ad Isma'il, chairman of the Board of Directors of the Saqr Factories.

Afterwards, President Mubarak and Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan visited the Al-Salihiyah area, where they made the following statements:

[Begin recording] [Mubarak] Our acquaintance with Shaykh Zayid is not just a recent one. I have known him since 1975 and have met with him several times. I have sensed this man's integrity and loyalty to the Arab causes. He has always been an advocate of issues of unity. This fact, and the distinguished relations linking us with the Gulf states in general and with the UAE in particular, are what maintain the love, affection, and cooperation between us. I do not believe there is anyone who does not like Shaykh Zayid and the UAE.

[Unidentified correspondent] Your Highness Shaykh Zayid, you have demonstrated skill and great knowledge in agricultural matters through your talks and discussions today with Egyptian agricultural experts. What is your impression of the agriculture in Egypt? Can we say that there will be cooperation between Egypt and the UAE in agricultural development?

[Shaykh Zayid] Certainly. Cooperation between Egypt and the UAE will not be limited to agriculture only. Active cooperation will cover all fields of interest to Egypt, the UAE, and the Arab world as a whole.

[Correspondent] What are your dreams for the UAE, Egypt, and the Arab countries?

[Shaykh Zayid] What?

[Correspondent] Dreams, dreams.

[Shaykh Zayid] There are no dreams. What we have is a clear, tangible, and realistic vision that we are brothers within one nation. Every [words indistinct] and force in Egypt is for the Arab world and particularly for the Gulf states.

[Mubarak] Shaykh Zayid wishes to say that we are not living in dreams, but rather we are involved in action and cooperation.

[Correspondent] Shaykh Zayid, President Mubarak has always said that Arab solidarity is not mere words. It needs coordination and cooperation among the Arab countries. Can we say that coordination has actually begun between Egypt and the UAE?

[Shaykh Zayid] Surely. However, Egypt and the UAE in the Arab world must display solidarity and mutual support away from any skepticism and doubt and without beating around the bush. This is the character of the Arab nation and what will restore its lost glory and pride. [end recording]

AL-BAYAN on Visit

JN161627 Dubayy AL-BAYAN in Arabic 14 Mar 88 p 1

[Editorial: "The UAE and Arab Egypt"]

[Text] His Highness Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan, the head of state, began an official visit to the Arab Republic of Egypt yesterday. This visit carries many indications of sincere brotherhood and the strong bonds between these two parts of the Arab homeland, on the government and popular levels. The warm reception accorded his highness on the official and popular levels reflects the appreciation of President Mubarak and the Egyptian Arab people for the stands and pan-Arab policy of the UAE in its relations with all its Arab brothers. This policy is based on solidarity.

The UAE abides by the principles of trust in bilateral relations, mutual respect, and noninterference in domestic affairs to attain Arab solidarity. The UAE's abidance by these principles has qualified it to play a role in clearing the Arab atmosphere and paving the way for reconciliation. The UAE has supported and continues to support any joint Arab action and any effort to attain unity in the ranks, as well as effective solidarity.

The UAE realizes the importance of Egypt in joint Arab action, given its civilization, political influence, and population density. That is why the UAE has always been eager to overcome the circumstances that led to the diplomatic estrangement between Egypt and many Arab countries. His Highness Shaykh Zayid played a prominent role in the Amman summit's resolution allowing every country to restore its relations with Egypt, the big sister.

With the resumption of these relations, Egypt gradually began to regain its position in the Arab world. This step has benefited not only Egypt but also the entire Arab nation, because Egypt becomes stronger with the Arabs and the Arabs become stronger with Egypt.

The UAE, which believes in the importance of Arab solidarity to confront the ever-increasing provocations, such as the Israeli aggression, the U.S. bias to it, and the prolongation of the Iraq-Iran war, pins high hopes on the talks His Highness Shaykh Zayid will hold with his brother, the president of the Arab Republic of Egypt. These talks will tackle all that is of interest to Arab and Islamic action, particularly the popular uprising against the Israeli occupation. The issue of solidarity will be the objective and the essence of these talks. A sincere solidarity will constitute the sound and effective beginning of joint Arab action.

Al-Baz To Hold Talks With 'Arafat in Tunis

NC161952 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1225 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Cairo, 16 Mar (MENA)—In its edition to be published this Friday, the AL-MUSAWWAR weekly magazine reports that Dr Usamah al-Baz, director of President Husni Mubarak's Office for Political Affairs and first under secretary of the Egyptian Foreign Ministry, has gone to Tunis to meet with PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat.

The magazine says that Dr al-Baz' talks with 'Arafat will center on the following three points:

1. The need to go back to the Palestinian-Jordanian agreement, on the basis that it is the issue most worthy of attention with regard to the Israeli withdrawal from the Arab territories in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

2. Support for the Palestinian uprising and the realization of its goals.

3. The decision on the possible establishment of an internationally recognized provisional government to recognize Security Council Resolution 242.

The magazine adds that [incomplete sentence as received].

'Final Position' on Peace Plan Still To Come

PM151451 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 9 Mar 88 p 2

[Unattributed report: "AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT From Cairo; Egyptian Reservation on Shultz Plan; Arab Response Before 20 March]

[Text] AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that Egypt's final position on the U.S. plan to reactivate the peace process in the region will become clear over the next few days, following Yitzhaq Shamir's visit to Washington and the Syrian and Jordanian responses, to be conveyed to the U.S. Administration not later than 20 March.

Informed Egyptian sources have told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the Egyptian role with regard to the U.S. plan will be confined to helping to move the issue toward a settlement rather than back into deadlock, without dwelling on details. This is because the matter first and foremost concerns the other parties concerned—those whose own rights are at stake, namely the Palestinians.

At the same time, Egypt has shown some reservations on a number of clauses in the U.S. plan that concern the need for Israel to agree to the nomination of Palestinian figures as candidates to participate in the joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation.

Informed sources in the Egyptian Foreign Ministry have told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that Egypt has held contacts with the Arab sides concerned, in the course of which it has pointed out the danger that this year could go by without a start being made on a settlement or an international conference being held—which would deadlock the issue and lose the benefit of the position arising from the Palestinian uprising and U.S. public opinion and media sympathy with the Palestinians.

Moreover, diplomatic reports in Cairo have pointed out that the talks held by George Shultz in the Arab capitals—Damascus, Amman and Cairo—have confirmed the three states' interest in a settlement, but that the one obstacle is Yitzhaq Shamir, who rejects the principle of an international conference and the exchange of land for peace.

Ghali Begins 10-Day African Tour 16 Mar

NC160813 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0715 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Cairo, 16 Mar (MENA)—Dr Butrus Ghali, minister of state for foreign affairs, left Cairo this morning for Lusaka, Zambia, on the first leg of a 10-day African tour that will also take him to Mozambique and Swaziland.

In a predeparture statement, Minister Ghali said he is carrying written messages from President Husni Mubarak to the presidents of these countries. He noted that his tour falls within the context of the Egyptian diplomatic activity designed to promote the relations between Egypt and the African Frontline States, and to stress Egypt's support for them.

The minister of foreign affairs added that he will lead Egypt's delegation to the meetings of the OAU's Liaison Group, which are scheduled to be held in Zambia today and will fix the date and place of the conference on African debts, to be attended by both the debtor and creditor countries. While in Mbabane, he will attend the meetings of the Egyptian-Swazi joint committee to promote bilateral relations in all fields of interest, he added.

'Mosad Plan' Targeting 'Abd al-Nasir 'Foiled'

PM151259 Cairo AL-AHRAR in Arabic 7 Mar 88 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Assassination Attempt on Khalid 'Abd al-Nasir; Three Israelis Detained and Khalid Smuggled to Algeria"]

[Text] AL-AHRAR has learned that the Yugoslav security organs have foiled a plan by Israel Intelligence Services, Mosad, to assassinate Khalid 'Abd al-Nasir in Belgrade.

During the last week of February, Khalid 'Abd al-Nasir, the second accused in the Egypt's Revolution Organization case, noticed some strange faces following him and recording the very few movements he was forced to make in Belgrade.

He told two Nasirites accompanying him in the capital about it. The two Nasirites informed the Yugoslav security organs. The Yugoslav authorities apprehended three Israeli suspects and a plan was laid down to counter the Israel Mosad plan by smuggling Khalid out of Yugoslavia. Khalid secretly flew to Algeria last Friday (26 February) after a well thought-out plan was devised to take him in great secrecy from his apartment in a Belgrade suburbs to the airport, accompanied by one of the Nasirites.

Khalid 'Abd al-Nasir spent 3 days as a guest of the Algerian President Bendjedid, then he suddenly returned to Belgrade last Sunday (28 February) with his Nasirite colleague.

Rumors have circulated that Khalid asked Algerian President Bendjedid to grant him the right of political asylum in Algeria but that Bendjedid refused, and so he returned with his colleague to Yugoslavia.

However, a Nasirite source very close to Khalid 'Abd al-Nasir completely denied the rumor, and said that Khalid did not fly to Algeria to ask for political asylum but rather to disappear for a while from Belgrade, in order to mislead the Israeli intelligence services which are still pursuing him.

The Nasirite source added—asking not to be named—that Khalid 'Abd al-Nasir is seriously considering an immediate return to Cairo in order to give himself up to the Egyptian authorities to be tried.

Trade Union Leader Accepts Soviet Invitation

NC151735 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1630 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Cairo, 15 Mar (MENA)—Ahmad al-'Amawi, chairman of the Egyptian Trade Union Federation, has received an invitation from the Presidium of the Soviet All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions to head a delegation from the Egyptian Trade Union Federation on a visit to Moscow, to participate in the May Day celebrations. The invitation also calls for talks between the Egyptian delegation and the Soviet trade union leaders on ways of promoting bilateral relations.

Al-'Amawi has stated that the Egyptian Federation has accepted the invitation, the first since 1974, adding that he will discuss the formation of the delegation next week. He noted that he will not be able to lead the delegation as he will be occupied with the labor day celebrations in Egypt at the time.

Soviet Envoy on Shamir's 'Rejection' of Plan

NC161325 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1250 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Cairo, 16 Mar (MENA)—Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, received Soviet Ambassador in Cairo Gennadiy Zhuravlev today and discussed bilateral relations with him.

Following the meeting, the Soviet ambassador said that he had handed Dr 'Abd al-Majid a copy of the statement issued by the Soviet Government on Afghanistan, which underlines the Soviet Union's commitment to withdraw from Afghan territories after signing the relevant agreements on this with Afghanistan.

Commenting on the stand of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir on the U.S. ideas to establish peace in the Middle East region and his rejection of these ideas, the ambassador said that this rejection creates a new situation. He added that the Middle East problem will top the list of issues to be discussed at the next meeting between the U.S. secretary of state and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze in Washington next Monday.

Tabah Arbitration Panel Begins Hearings

NC152045 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 2000 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Dr Nabil al-'Arabi, head of Egypt's delegation to the Tabah Arbitration Panel, has said that the delegation will present its verbal pleadings to the panel over the next 4 days, starting today. He added that the delegation will produce important 80-year-old documents that confirm Egypt's right to Tabah, in adition to the documents already in the court's possession attesting to this.

Al-'Arabi pointed out that the arbitration panel had seen on-site border markings that prove Egypt's ownership of this area.

AL-SHA'B Notes Decline in Israeli Tourism

PM151537 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 8 Mar 88 p 1

[Unattributed report: "The Israelis"]

[Text] The number of Israeli tourists to Egypt through the Tabah corridor has dropped to five a day since the flare-up of the Palestinian uprising, whereas previously

the number of those tourists reached 150 individuals a day. The Israeli Government has instructed its citizens to avoid visiting Egypt out of fear that they may be subject to assassination attempts.

U.S. Decision on PLO Offices Shows 'Bias'

NC150725 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2300 GMT 14 Mar 88

[Text] Cairo, 14 Mar (MENA)—AL-AKHBAR newspaper has described the decision of U.S. President Ronald Reagan's government to close down the PLO office in New York as illegal. The paper adds that this decision constitutes a blatant violation of the UN Headquarters Agreement, signed by the United States in 1974.

In an editorial to appear in Tuesday's edition, AL-AKHBAR notes that the timing of the decision, which coincides with the U.S. Administration's attempt to appear as a serious partner in the search for a peaceful settlement of Middle East problems, casts profound doubt on the sincerity of the U.S. Administration's intentions and on its competence to play the role of mediator. Its acts reveal a striking bias in favor of one of the parties, Israel, AL-AKHBAR says.

The paper goes on to say: It seems that the approaching U.S. presidential and congressional elections have prompted officials to implement this suspect decision which the Congress made in order to please the Jewish voters and the Tel Aviv government. The implementation is going ahead despite the fact that the State Department has often declared its opposition to the decision.

AL-AKHBAR adds that had the PLO offices in Washington and New York violated any laws or committed any acts incompatible with their status in the host country, the behavior of the United States would have been justified. However, this action has shaken U.S credibility and has placed an obstacle on the road to a solution of the Arab-Israeli dispute, given the bias that Washington is determined to demonstrate in various ways and on various occasions. The U.S. Administration and Congress have not, in fact, put forward any justification for the closure of the two offices.

Paper Views Palestinian 'Mistakes,' Comments

NC170752 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0640 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Cairo, 17 Mar (MENA)—The AL-AHRAM newspaper believes that there will be no harm done if Palestinian leaders openly announce their views of the current proposals on the Palestinian issue in the political arena. However, the paper adds, we also believe that the situation calls for a certain degree of organization and diplomacy.

The paper states that political action must rise to the level of the revolutionary uprising in the occupied Arab territories, an uprising with which all conscientious people throughout the world are sympathetic. The paper says that political action, using specific methods governed by experience and wise diplomacy, could complement and support the uprising.

In its editorial today, AL-AHRAM expresses the belief that Palestinian action has regrettably made two mistakes in the recent stage. The first mistake was when Palestinians refused to meet with U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz during his stay in the region, without at least presenting their demands, reservations, or reasons. The second mistake lies in the series of press statements which express stands and policies, but which instead should have taken the form of official statements at the proper time.

The paper asks: Why do the Arabs not let Israel be solely blamed for impeding the peace march, particularly as Israel was the party which rejected the U.S. proposals in their initial form, when they were mere ideas? AL-AHRAM also questions why Arabs unnecessarily hastened to take a stand similar to that of Israel.

The paper states that nobody said the U.S. initiative should be accepted. More important is when and where we should announce our views and assert our rights. The editorial concludes by saying that choosing the most effective approach, exposing our rival on the threshold of his home, and letting him fall into his own traps, as the strugglers in the occupied territories are doing, are all more important.

Libya

Al-Qadhdhafi Meets With Sudan's Al-Mirghani

JN161137 Khartoum SUNA in English 1240 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Tripoli, Libya March 16 (SUNA)—Head of State Supreme Council Ahmad al-Mirghani and Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi yesterday held a round of talks at the hospitality house of Surt Municipality.

Following their meeting, Al-Qadhdhafi said that his talks with Al-Mirghani had dealt with issues of mutual concern, and the viewpoints of the two sides were identical on all issues.

Among the most important issues discussed in the meeting is the support of the Arab solidarity and the consolidation of the Sudanese-Libyan relation, Al-Qadhdhafi said.

He added that in this respect he had issued a decree under which the Sudanese people are admitted to enter Libya without passport procedures and they are allowed to tour the country like the Libyan nationals.

In reply for a question about the current Palestinian uprising, Al-Qadhdhafi said that the Palestinian uprising has not reached the peak yet.

It will only reach the maximum point when the Zionist existence is to be eradicated, he said. He called for more support to the Palestinian uprising to attain its objectives.

About the escalation of the Iraq-Iran war and the Libyan mediation in this respect, Al-Qadhdhafi said after the war of the cities he sent an envoy for both countries to overcome this escalation and end this war indicating that Iran has accepted to end the cities war and to continue in fighting while Iraq did not agree to part [as received] the war "either war or peace."

He told reporters that he had practiced heavy pressure on both sides resulted in the halt of cities war.

We will continue exerting efforts to end this war, he said adding that we are preparing for issuance of a [word indistinct] to declare both sides infidels.

Jabir Receives Soviet Navy Commander in Chief

LD161654 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1615 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Tripoli, 16 Mar, JANA—Colonel Abu Bakr Yunis Jabir, commander in chief of the Libyan Arab Armed Forces, received today Fleet Admiral Vladimir Nikolayevich Chernavin, commander in chief of the Soviet Navy, and the delegation accompanying him.

The commander in chief of the Soviet Navy arrived in Tripoli the day before yesterday on a visit to the Great Jamahiriyah.

Morocco

Foreign Minister Filali Pays Visit to Austria

AU151047 Vienna WIENER ZEITUNG in German 15 Mar 88 p 1

[Text] Moroccan Foreign Minister Abdellatif Filali arrived yesterday for a 3-day official visit to Austria. On Monday [14 March] Filali was to visit President Kurt Waldheim.

In addition, a meeting with UNIDO [United Nations Industrial Development Organization] Director General Domingo L. Siazon and IAEA Director General Hans Blix was scheduled.

Today, after a talk with Chancellor Franz Vranitzky, Filali will visit Parliament and meet with parliamentarians.

In the afternoon, working talks with Vice Chancellor Foreign Minister Alois Mock are planned. They will probably focus on the Middle East question, the Gulf war, security in the Mediterranean, and the conflict between Morocco, Algeria, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Saquia El Hamra and Rio de Oro (Polisario) concerning Western Sahara.

SPOe [Socialist Party of Austria] deputies want to confront Filali with human rights violations and hand him a list of about 700 Saharan civilians who have disappeared from occupied Western Sahara.

Suleyman Tayeb, Polisario representative in Vienna, appealed to the Austrian Government to advocate the acceptance of the UN resolutions by Morocco.

Received by President Waldheim

AU151048 Vienna WIENER ZEITUNG in German 15 Mar 88 p 2

[Text] President Kurt Waldheim yesterday received Abdellatif Filali, minister of foreign affairs and cooperation of the Kingdom of Morocco, who is currently paying an official visit to Austria.

Their talks focused specifically on international questions, such as the situation in the Middle East. In addition, possibilities of expanding bilateral economic relations between Morocco and Austria were also discussed.

The reception was also attended by Toufik Kabbaj, ambassador of the Kingdom of Morocco to Austria; Tahar Nejjar [name as published], head of the West European Department; and Robert Marschik, Austrian ambassador to Morocco.

Briefs

Bank Signs Loan Accords

Rabat, March 11. (MAP)—Morocco and the African Development Bank (ADB) Thursday signed here four accords on loans to Morocco worth 2,710 million dirhams (one dollar is a little more than eight dirhams). The accords were signed by Moroccan Minister of Finance Mohamed Berrada and ADB President Babacar N'Diaye. The loans will finance the construction of facilities of drinking water processing, storage and conveyances in the northern town of Tangiers. The loans are also to contribute to equipping the two banks of the Loukkos River, south of Tangiers, with irrigation outfits and ditches, to constructing and maintaining roads, ports, railways and extending of some airports and to cofinancing a programme with the World Bank on the readjustment of the agricultural sector. [Excerpt] [*LD120138 Rabat MAP English 1200 GMT 11 Mar 88*]

Saudi Investment Venture

Rabat, March 14,(MAP)—The documents relating to the project on the creation of a Moroccan-Saudi joint investment venture were worked out here during a meeting on March 9 and 10 between delegations from the Saudi and Moroccan finance departments. The two delegatons

decided to submit the documents to the concerned departments of the two countries to finalize them. The creation of the venture was recommended by the Moroccan-Saudi Grand Joint Commission during its fourth session held in Riyadh last December 12 to 16. The venture is to have a capital of 400 million dirhams (one dollar is worth a little more than eight dirhams). It will have its headquarters in Morocco and aims at financing development projects in the two countries. [Text] [*LD150118 Rabat MAP in English 1249 GMT 14 Mar 88*]

Sudan

Sanadah Meets Palestinian 'Uprising' Delegation

JN161630 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1430 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Khartoum, 16 Mar (SUNA)—Foreign Minister Dr Ma'mun Sanadah has reiterated the suport of Sudan—its government and people—for the popular Palestinian uprising being staged in the occupied territories. He also affirmed Sudan will extend material and mora' support to help maintain it.

The foreign minister voiced this position this morning during a meeting with an Arab League delegation currently visiting the country.

The delegation, here to discuss Sudanese support for the popular uprising, includes Al-Munsif al-May, an adviser to the Arab League secretary general, and 'Abd al-Rahim Ahmad, PLO Executive Committee member.

'Abd al-Rahim Ahmad reiterated the appreciation the Palestinian people and the PLO have for the stand Sudan has taken in support of the Palestinian issue since its early days.

The meeting was attended by Ahmad Muhammad Nur, director of the Arab Department at the Foreign Ministry, and Abu Raja'i, PLO representative in Sudan.

It is worth recalling that the Sudanese people staged a mammoth march in the national capital yesterday, Tuesday, to voice their support for the Palestinian uprising and to condemn and reject the Zionist occupation of Palestinian territory and the U.S. veto.

Prime Minister Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi and Abu Raja'i addressed the marchers.

SPLA Kills 8, Wounds 19 in Bahr al-Ghazal

EA151159 (Clandestine) Radio of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army in English 1300 GMT 14 Mar 88

[Excerpt] Eight enemy militiamen have been killed and 19 others were wounded in clashes with the SPLA forces of Eagle Task Force, under the direct command of Alternate Commander (Peter Wol Apiu) on 17th of last month near Rumakeir in northern Bahr al-Ghazal.

A correspondent says that the (Murahilin) militiamen were sent by Sadiq al-Mahdi's troops to look for cattle and slaves in Aweil and Gogrial Districts.

The spokesman of the SPLA Political-Military High Command has asked all Sudanese patriots to condemn Sadiq al-Mahdi's regime for its primitive use of traditional tribal conflicts for political ends. [passage omitted]

Combined SPLA Forces Attack Abyei 11 Mar

EA152100 (Clandesitne) Radio of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army in English 1300 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Excerpt] Combined SPLA forces of Naj Dyar under command of Captain John Lam Chuol, and units of Kalashnikov under command of Captain (Garbriel Kuot Deng) and the overall command of Commander Daniel Aweit Akuot, raided Abyei garrison on 11 March 1988, killing 3 and wounding 17 enemy soldiers.

Following this attack the enemy militiamen reportedly rounded up the civilian population in Abyei town on 12 March 1988 and subjected them to severe torture. One man, by name Chuol from Twoich area, was reported killed.

The correspondent says that the enemy militiamen in Abyei town appear to overpower the regular army and they have taken the law into their own hands.

This, he said, clearly confirms Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi's intentions to replace the Sudanese Army with the tribal militia who are loyal to the Ummah Party, and the situation in Abyei, he says, has revealed the racial characteristic behavior of Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi's regime. [passage omitted]

Briefs

Food Aid for Tribe

Khartoum, March, 16, (SUNA)—The World Food Programme has agreed to provide the Beja Tribe—Eastern Sudan—with urgent food assistance at a cost of more than 10 Million dollars. The Beja area has lost 50 percent of their livestock due to the drought and desertification since 1982. [Text] [*JN161952 Khartoum SUNA in English 1730 GMT 16 Mar 88*]

Meningitis Outbreak Kills 82

Khartoum, 14 Mar—Some 3,131 cases of meningitis have been detected in the national capital and the regions, the minister of health announced today. Speaking before the Constituent Assembly Monday, Dr. Husayn Abu Salih said the death toll of meningitis is put at 82 and called on voluntary organizations and youth associations to close [as received] their efforts to contain the spread of this epidemic. [Excerpt] [*EA170051 Khartoum SUNA in English 1645 GMT 14 Mar 88*]

Tunisia

Mauritanian President Postpones Upcoming Visit

LD152035 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] The Foreign Ministry has issued a statement to the effect that following a telephone conversation with President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, President Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania has requested that the visit he was due to make to Tunisia 16-17 March in response to an invitation from the president be postponed.

Another date will be set for the visit which will be agreed upon by the two sides.

Baccouche Meets Mauritanian Foreign Minister

LD170421 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 2300 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Wednesday evening at the government palace in Casbah, Prime Minister Hedi Baccouche conferred with Major Mohamed Lamine Ould N'Diayane, Mauritanian minister of foreign affairs and cooperation and envoy of President Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya to President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali.

During the meeting, which was attended by Mr. Mahmoud Mestiri, minister of foreign affairs, and Mr. Mohamed Lamine Ould Yahya, Mauritanian ambassador to Tunisia, they reviewed Tunisian-Mauritanian relations and bilateral cooperation on the occasion of the upcoming meeting of the Tunisian-Mauritanian joint committee in Tunis.

Maj. Mohamed Lamine Ould N'Diayane described relations between the two countries as excellent and exemplary. The meeting included a discussion of mutually interesting issues of the Arab and Islamic worlds.

Egypt's Al-Baz Arrives in Tunis on Visit

NC162047 Cairo MENA in English 2000 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Tunis, March 16 (MENA)—First Undersecretary of the Egyptian Foreign Ministry and President's Political Advisor Dr. Usamah al-Baz arrived here tonight on few days' visit, the first by an Egyptian official following the resumption of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali is expected to meet Dr. al-Baz on Friday. He will also hold talks with other senior officials on promoting cooperation between the two countries.

Chairman of the PLO Executive Committee Yasir 'Arafat is to confer tonight or tomorrow with Dr. al-Baz for discussing developments of the uprising, means of its support, and coordination for pushing forward the just and comprehensive peace process in the Middle East.

Intra-Gulf Affairs

GCC Ministerial Council Issues Press Release

LD161939 Riyadh SPA Arabic 1620 GMT
16 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Riyadh, 16 Mar (SPA)—The GCC Ministerial Council this evening ended its 26th session held under the chairmanship of His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, the foreign minister, at the headquarters of the General Secretariat of the Council in Riyadh.

His royal highness the foreign minister made a speech in the closing session. His highness expressed, in his address, his happiness with the positive results realized in this meeting in accordance with the directives of the leaders of the Council. His highness affirmed that the achievements realized by the Council in all fields have proved its growing ability to achieve its objectives of integration at all levels. [passage omitted]

Then the GCC secretary general read out the press release issued by the GCC Ministerial Council's 26th session. Here follows its full text:

The Ministerial Council held its 26th session at the General Secretariat headquarters in Riyadh between 15-16 March 1988, under the chairmanship of His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, the Saudi foreign minister and chairman of the current Ministerial Council session.

The Council was briefed on a report submitted by His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, foreign minister and chairman of the current Council session, with regard to the recent contacts that took place concerning the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 598. The Council expressed its gratitude for the efforts made by the chair and stressed the importance of implementing this resolution.

The Council also discussed the situation in the region, the development of the Iraqi-Iranian war, and the recent flareup of the war of cities between both sides.

The Council also touched upon the contacts that have been achieved with the aim of implementing UN Security Council Resolution 598 and the progress made through these contacts toward implementing this resolution.

To implement the Riyadh summit solutions, the Council approved the continuing intensification of worldwide contacts, particularly with UN Security Council Permanent member states, to secure the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution.

The Council also voiced its support for the efforts made by UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar to implement the resolution.

The Council discussed the current Arab situation and the uprising of the Palestinian Arab people. While the Council hails the great Palestinian resistance against the continuing Zionist occupation and its settlement plans, it proudly notes that the valiant resistance and firm stance of the militant Palestinian Arab people are a clearcut rejection of the policy of fait accompli, which the Zionist enemy is trying to impose.

This resistance and stance are evidence of their firm and legitimate belief in their right to self-determination, while preserving their pan-Arab identity and exercising their national rights on its soil.

In this context the Council reviewed the contacts carried out by the chair, on behalf of member states, to secure international support for the struggle of the Palestinian people. The Council has also approved the continuation of support for the uprising in all spheres.

The Council followed with concern the U.S. decision to close down the PLO mission in New York. The Council expressed its condemnation of this decision and its support for the measures taken by the United Nations in this context. The Council calls on the United States to reconsider this direction, which contradicts the agreement concluded between the United States and the United Nations.

Saudi Prince Issues Statement

LD170153 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 2330 GMT
16 Mar 88

[Text] Riyadh, 16 Mar (SPA)—His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, Saudi foreign minister, has indicated that the Arab group at the UN is making contacts with regard to the U.S. decision to close down the PLO UN office.

In a press statement he made this evening at the end of the 26th session of the GCC Ministerial Council, he said that "the Arab group has asked the UN General Assembly to look into this matter." He pointed out that the GCC is taking part in these contacts in its capacity as part of the Arab group.

Answering a question on the view of the GCC vis-a-vis the call of the Algerian Government to hold an Arab summit, His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal said: "This matter was not discussed collectively during the Ministerial Council meeting because each of the GCC states is a member of the Arab League." He pointed out that such issues are discussed by each state.

His royal highness indicated that the Kingdom has sent its reply regarding this point. He said: "The Kingdom always agrees to holding Arab meetings and to attend them anywhere and at any time."

Concerning dialogue between the GCC and the EEC, his royal highness noted that he will visit the FRG on behalf of the Council. He said: "During this visit, which has been scheduled for a long time, I will meet his excellency the German foreign minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, the chairman of the EEC current session, to discuss relations between the communities." His royal highness added that a group of negotiators from both sides will meet for talks next week.

Answering a question on the response of the UN Security Council's permanent member states toward the efforts of the GCC to end the Iraq-Iran war, His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal said this matter and the response of these countries were reviewed during the Ministerial Council meetings.

His royal highness expressed optimism regarding this response and said the adoption of a UN Security Council resolution may help halt the Iraq-Iran war.

Kuwait

Envoy Delivers Shevardnadze Message to Al-Jabir

LD161658 Kuwait KUNA in English 1503 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Kuwait, March 16 (KUNA)—Acting Premier and Foreign Minister Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir Wednesday received a reply message from Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardandze delivered by Soviet Ambassador to Kuwait Ernest Zverev during a meeting with Shaykh Sabah at the Foreign Ministry.

Shaykh Sabah told reporters that the messages dealt with the developments in the region and the dangerous escalation in the Iraq-Iran war.

Shaykh Sabah emphasized anew that any delay in implementing the Security Council Resolution 598 would definitely lead to more disastrous and dangerous escalation. And that is what is going now at present represented by the shelling of cities, the victims of which is thousands of innocents.

He added that Shevardnadze's message also dealt with the situation in Afghanistan and the underway efforts toward reaching a settlement for the crisis there.

On his part Zverev said the Soviet leadership well understands Kuwait's concern for the delay in reaching an end to the Iraq-Iran war.

The ambassador told reporters that it is necessary that efforts of the international community concentrate on this direction to renew the hope of a peaceful settlement for the Iraq-Iran conflict.

He added that he expressed during his talks with Shaykh Sabah the concern of Moscow for the resumption of the war of cities between Iran and Iraq, which is escalating the situation and increasing tension in the region.

He added that the Soviet Union has embarked on new measures at the UN Security Council affirming that his country is prepared to cooperate with Kuwait and the Arab Gulf states with the aim of reaching a quick end to the conflict.

He further said that he delivered to Shaykh Sabah the text of the Soviet sttement issued yesterday on the situation in Afghanistan and the reasons for the deadlock of the negotiations between Pakistan and Afghanistan in Geneva on the Afghan crisis.

Saudi Arabia

Further on Visit by Jordan's King Husayn

Talks With King Fahd

LD162047 Riyadh Domestic Service in Arabic 2000 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Saudi-Jordanian talks were held this evening in the royal court of Al-Yamamah Palace, between King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, and His Majesty King Husayn of Jordan. The talks were attended on the Saudi side by Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, foreign minister; 'Ali al-Sha'ir, minister of information; Dr 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Khuwaytir, education minister and acting minister of higher education; and Muhammad al-Fahd al-'Isa, Saudi ambassador to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

Attending on the Jordanian side were: Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i; Prince Ra'd ibn Zayd, senior secretary; Hani al-Khasawinah, minister of information; and Muhammad Rasul al-Kilani, Jordanian ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Attends Dinner Banquet

JN162144 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 2100 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Excerpt] Riyadh—Talks began between the Jordanian side led by His Majesty King Husayn and the Saudi side led by King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, at Al-Yamamah Palace in Riyadh this evening.

The talks were attended on the Jordanian side by Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i, Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd ibn Zayd, Information Minister Dr Hani al-Khasawinah, and former Jordanian ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Muhammad Rasul al-Kilani.

On the Saudi side, they were attended by His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysan, foreign minister; 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Khuwaytir, education minister and acting higher education minister; 'Ali al-Sha'ir, information minister; and the Saudi ambassador in Amman.

The custodian of the two holy mosques earlier hosted a great dinner banquet at Al-Yamamah Palace in honor of His Majesty King Husayn. The dinner banquet was attended by the delegation accompanying his majesty the king. The banquet was also attended by His Royal Highness Salman ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, prince of the Riyadh region; His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal; foreign minister; and a number of their highnesses the princes, the ministers, and senior Saudi civilian and military officials. [passage omitted]

Discusses European Tour

JN171301 Amman Domestic Service in English 1200 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn and Saudi Arabian King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz held a bilateral meeting in Riyadh today. His majesty the king briefed the Saudi monarch on the outcome of his majesty's European tour and his talks with European Community foreign ministers which has drawn considerable support to the Palestinian cause.

The tour also won European backing for convening an international peace conference on the Middle East, as well as international support for the popular uprising in the occupied territories.

Talks during the meeting also covered Jordan's efforts to win international support to halt the Iran-Iraq war in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution No 598. The views of both leaders on major Arab issues were identical.

Ends Visit to Riyadh

LD171419 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1130 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Riyadh, 17 Mar (SPA)—His Majesty King Husayn ibn Talal of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan left Riyadh this afternoon. He was seen off at King Khalid International Airport by the custodian of the two holy mosques, King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Sa'ud.

SAUDI GAZETTE Views Closure of PLO Mission

PM161617 Jeddah SAUDI GAZETTE in English 14 Mar 88 p 14

[Editorial: "Move Towards War"]

[Text] The American decision to close down the PLO mission at the United Nations betrays mismanagement and disharmony in the U.S. Administration. The Justice Department plans to go to court to "enforce" a law whose first target and victim is the PLO, while the State Department considers the law "a very bad piece of legislation" and "one of the dumber things Congress has done lately".

Which of the two departments is actually representing the Reagan administration is not known to anyone. It resembles the medieval era situations when, finding the centre weak and ineffective, provinces would rise in rebellion, sometimes fighting among themselves. The Reagan administration's two "provinces" are showing similar "enmity" in the absence of a strong and effective "centre" which is showing inability to invoke the constitutional facility to check and balance Congress.

The situation is such as to affect the working of the U.S. Government itself and the hot pursuit of the controversial law is going to evaporate American influence and its administration's ability to remain a world leader. The matter is really not of concern to anybody except the American people if they are truly concerned with the working of their government, particularly in this election year.

They may ignore it, thinking that the Reagan administration is there only for ten more months and a new administration will be as strong as it should be. However, such views is from a wrong angle, because if the situation is not checked now, the future administrations would not be able to arrest it. Belated actions don't produce fruits.

As for the UN, the matter is more serious. Regardless of whether the United States remains and wants to act as a world leader, the world body has to decide whether it wants to represent the whole humanity or just one department of a member government. Its headquarters are certainly on the American territory, but legally, the United Nations is not American territory; its headquarters are "United Nations territory" where the United States does not have a right to impose its laws.

Earlier the United Nations had sent feelers that it might shift its headquarters to Geneva or Vienna if the United States insists on the closure of the PLO mission. That is likely to lead the United States to withdraw from the organisation; but that will not be as easy and simple as was its withdrawal from UNESCO. The new move would resemble the withdrawal of axis powers from the League of Nations. If the United States commits a similar folly it will force the world into a war more disastrous then World Wars I and II combined.

Does the United States, especially the American Congress, want that war?

If yes, Christian fundamentalism should be seen as clouding the global horizons with its increasing influence inside America.

Who if not Israel is leading the United States and the world to that unthinkable catastrophe? Yitzhaq Shamir's tone has softened noticeably after the Justice Department's latest announcement on the issue of the PLO'S UN mission, and that is a case in point.

If that is what is "justice" for the Justice Department and the state of American affairs for the State Department, then there is no cause for the Palestinians, or Arabs, or the people of the world to believe that Washington means what it says about the Mideast peace or world peace. And if the United States wants war, the United Nations must strive more vigorously to avoid it; and if it happens, it should not take the rest of the world by surprise.

Briefs

Funds Donated to Palestinians

Rafiq Shakir al-Natshah, member of the Fatah Central Committee and PLO representative to the Kingdom, said His Royal Highness Prince Salman ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, governor of Riyadh Region, ordered today the transfer of 14 million Saudi riyals, which represent the donations of Saudi and Muslim citizens in the Kingdom—Palestinians, Arabs and Muslims—who have contributed to backing the uprising of the Palestinian people in occupied Palestine. [Excerpt] [*LD160129 Riyadh Domestic Service in Arabic 2000 GMT 15 Mar 88*]

Yemen Arab Republic

President Salih on Unity, Foreign Relations

JN151642 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 15 Mar88

[Excerpts] The meetings of the fourth ordinary sessionof the Standing Committee began in the presidential palace this morning under brother Colonel 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, president of the Republic, Armed Forces commander in chief, and secretary general of the General People's Congress.

The brother president opened this session by pointing out this session would discuss important issues on the local, regional, Arab, Islamic, and international level. After this, those attending the session listened to a report submitted by the brother president on the activities of the Standing Committee and the General People's Congress during the period between the third and fourth session. [passage omitted]

On unity action between the two parts of Yemen, President Salih said in his report: We pursue our unity march from the premise of our country's unionist policy. This policy is dictated by the belief that Yemeni unity is inevitable. Our objectives and revolutionary achievements will be completed and our people's resources and capabilities will be enhanced by this unity. This unity will also enhance our people's sovereignty and their impact on civilization. This will serve our Arab nation's struggle for unity, given that it is the natural introduction to comprehensive Arab unity.

From this premise, we continue to exercise our unity action and we are aware of the momentous responsibility we are shouldering to fulfill this noble objective. [passage omitted]

To meticulously abide by this responsibility, we take care to develop and enhance our unity action in a fraternal and constructive atmosphere and under the canopy of security and stability throughout Yemen. We also do this through continuous dialogue, understanding, cooperation, consultations, and coordination between the officials of the two parts of Yemen.

We are sincerely committed to these principles in spite of the developments in the southern part of the homeland during the 13 January 1986 incidents. As you know, these events have compelled us to exert constant efforts to contain the consequences of these bloody events. They have imposed on us new responsibilities in view of the fact we are one people with the same fate.

While we continue with these efforts, we persistently work to pursue unity action to achieve the goal of unity. We pursue this action in accordance with the statements and agreements on unity and the resolutions adopted by the Higher Yemeni Council to establish a cohesive and solid ground through serious and practical steps to embody our people's determination to achieve unity.

For this purpose, intensive contacts were held and visits were exchanged between several officials of the two parts of Yemen during this period to invigorate the unity march and place it on a sound course, a course which the masses in the two parts of Yemen have been waiting for.

The most important unity topics that were discussed during these contacts and visits consisted of how to develop our Yemeni economy through the establishment of joint national ventures that are closely linked to the exploration and exploitation of the resources of the Yemeni homeland within a framework of understanding and joint faith in the unity of the land and the people.

To translate our faith in ourselves and in our inevitable unity, and given that the unity of the interests of the homeland are among the most important factors and bases for the reunification of our homeland, we continued on the road that we have started with our brother officials in the southern part of the homeland in early 1985. However, the developments in the southern part of the homeland have dictated the rediscussion of all this. This is what is now being discussed with the brother officials in the southern part of the homeland.

These contacts and visits have contributed to approximating viewpoints in a manner serving our Yemeni homeland's higher interests, enhancing its awareness of

the dimensions of these unity steps, and avoiding any blemish that may harm the soundness of the course and the good intentions or harm in any way whatsoever the unity of the land and people.

On our country's foreign relations, the report says our country's sincere interaction with all developments in the Arab, Islamic, and international arena has won the respect of all countries thanks to the firm policy our country adopts in its relations with the fraternal and friendly countries.

This policy stems from the objectives of our glorious revolution and the contents of the national charter which are based on mutual respect, equal dealings, and the service of joint interests. In its relations with all countries, our country has abided by a policy of positive neutrality and nonalignment with respect to international conflicts. This has enabled our country to establish balanced relations with all countries to which we are bound by relations of brotherhood and friendship. [passage omitted]

Salih Receives PDRY Minister, Message 16 Mar

JN161343 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic
1200 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Brother Colonel 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, president of the Republic, Armed Forces commander in chief, and secretary general of the General People's Congress, received Brother Salih 'Abdallah Muthana, minister of transportation in the southern part of the homeland, in his office at the presidential palace this morning.

Muthana conveyed a message from Brothers 'Ali Salim al-Bid, [YSP] Central Committee secretary general; Haydar Abu Bakr al-'Attas, Supreme People's Council Presidium chairman; and the [YSP] Politburo members in the southern part of the homeland on a number of issues which concern the two parts.

The meeting was attended by Brother Eng Ahmad al-Ansi, minister of communciations and transportation and Standing Committee member, and Brother Yahya Husayn al-'Arashi, minister of state for unity affairs and Standing Committee member.

Algerian Call for Emergency Arab Summit Endorsed

JN102025 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic
2000 GMT 10 Mar 88

[Text] SABA' has learned that our country's permanent representative at the Arab League informed the Arab League General Secretariat today of our country's approval of the call made by the Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria to convene an emergency Arab summit to support the Palestinian people's revolution inside the occupied Arab territories.

This approval came after the Arab League General Secretariat distributed yesterday to the Arab League member states Algeria's official request to convene this emergency summit.

President Chairs Meeting on UN, Cities Attacks

JN161909 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1805 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] President leader Saddam Husayn this evening chaired a joint meeting of the RCC and the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party Regional Command. During the meeting, the political activities of the UN Security Council were examined. The RCC and Regional Command noticed that some sides, in order to achieve shortsighted purposes, directly or indirectly, have for some time been interpreting UN Security Council Resolution No 598 differently than the way that the resolution was issued. This was done once through what is called the secretary general's plan, and another time through other attempts and topics that do not flow into the course of a comprehensive treatment of the original issue.

The conferees also most regrettably noted that discussion of the issue of the bombardment of cities has also become a cover for ill intentions. When this issue is under discussion, some deliberately fail to raise its entire background, as should be done. They also do not include it in the core of the main issue.

Iraq has repeatedly warned that the bombardment of cities is a method adopted by Iran from the beginning of the war, and one that it has continued to use from time to time in a manner that it believes will fulfill a part of its wicked rulers' instincts for destruction and killing. Iraq most regrettably announces that, at a time when it informed the UN secretary general that Iran had resumed the shelling of the border city of Halabjah, and with the assistance of its ground forces seeked to destroy this city and its villages, some circles turned a blind eye to these facts and concentrated on the Iraqi missiles, which are striking at Tehran in an act of defending one's self and sovereignty.

We warn manipulators and traders in the fields of politics against any manipulation through which they think that they can harm our people's interests, and our rights in accordance with international law and the UN Charter. We affirm that there is no alternative to the comprehensive approach to end the war in an honorable manner and in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution No 598. Iraq has welcomed this resolution from the beginning and announced its readiness to implement it without manipulation. Iran rejected the resolution from the beginning and is still tampering with phrases and words to circumvent the resolution's meaning and principles.

'Aziz Meets With French Foreign Minister

JN162046 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1655 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Paris, 16 Mar (INA)—Tariq 'Aziz, Iraqi deputy prime minister and foreign minister, met here today with French Foreign Minister Jean-Bernard Raimond.

During the meeting, they discussed bilateral relations and developments in the Iraq-Iran war. In a statement to an INA correspondent in Paris today, Tariq 'Aziz said that he and his French counterpart exchanged viewpoints on the excellent Iraqi-French relations and the current developments in the region, including those regarding the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution No 598 and the current debates in this regard at the UN Security Council. He added that the talks with the French minister were useful and constructive.

The Iraqi foreign minister praised the French stand. He said this stand is known and clear regarding Resolution No 598 and the need to implement it fully. Tariq 'Aziz called on the UN Security Council to assume its responsibilities without hesitation.

He added that Iran's insistence on continuing the war against Iraq means that Iran rejects Resolution No 598, whose first clause calls for a cease-fire and withdrawal to international borders.

He said that Iran is continuing its attacks and invasion attempts against Iraq, thus defying the international community.

'Aziz Labels 'Some' UN Stands 'Deplorable'

JN162139 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 2023 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Interview with Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz by Antoine Nawfal in Paris, carried within the "Panorama" program—date not given; recorded]

[Text] [Nawfal] It seems that UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar is making a fresh attempt. He is authorized by the Security Council to start a series of talks with Iran and Iraq. Have you been contacted yet in this regard?

['Aziz] On this occasion I must comment on what has recently taken place at the Security Council. We have cooperated with the Security Council since the beginning of the conflict, because we did not desire war and it was imposed on us. We have positively dealt with the Security Council since the first days of its intervention. We accepted its trusteeship over the conflict and all its resolutions, the latest of which was Resolution 598. It is deplorable—and I must say this—that some Security Council member states, whether permanent or not, proceed from narrow and selfish considerations, which do not rise to the required level of responsibility. They do not take the firm stands they should take.

Iran rejected Security Council Resolution 598 before it was issued. Resolution 598 was not a surprise. It was not drafted in 2 days of deliberations behind the scenes in New York. This resolution began to be drafted in January 1987 and deliberations continued for several months. The Iranians roamed capitals in a bid to abort this initiative, and prevent the Council from shouldering its responsibility and issuing a binding resolution calling

for an end to the war, in accordance with the seventh chapter of the Charter. When the resolution was issued and became a fait accompli, they did not publicly and directly reject it because they knew that rejecting it directly would lead to sanctions against them. Therefore, they maneuvered, played on words, and embarked on all sorts of attempts that are well known to the international community and the Security Council members.

When you talk to any Security Council member, he will tell you that Iran has not accepted the resolution, but he does not admit this fact publicly, as this entails responsibilities; that is, he has to support and endorse the sanctions resolution and, subsequently, he might be deprived of economic or political privileges. This situation does not serve the cause of world peace in general. If the Security Council, or at least some of its members, moves according to narrow, selfish, and opportunist considerations, this will largely overshadow the Security Council's ability to perform its duties as a body responsible for world peace and security. What have they done lately? They have returned the situation to what it was 4 months ago when they asked the secretary general to talk to the two sides.

What can the secretary general do? If he asks me: What is your attitude toward Resolution 598? I will say: I accepted the resolution 8 months ago and you have a document signed by me, and I have nothing new. He will then ask the Iranians, who will repeat the same tricks they used during the last 8 months. This undermines the situation. Before my meeting with you I was talking to our permanent UN envoy. In my opinion, we have to criticize this step, but not from the angle of its contents. In any case, there is no harm in the continuation of consultations, but we criticize this lukewarm stand which the Council has been taking for several months.

Defense Minister Inspects Northern Sector

JN161615 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1558 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Baghdad, 16 Mar (INA)—Staff General 'Adnan Khayrallah, deputy commander in chief of the Armed Forces and Iraqi defense minister, today inspected the I Army Corps sector of operations.

The defense minister acquainted himself with the military measures adopted in the sector to crush any possible Iranian aggression on the invincible northern Iraqi border.

The deputy commander in chief of the Armed Forces gave his instructions on the necessary defense arrangements for consolidating the combat units' ability to foil frenzied enemy attempts to harm our chaste soil.

Reportage on Gulf War Combat Activities

Greek Tanker Hit Confirmed

JN161416 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1330 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] London, 16 Mar (INA)—The British newspaper LLOYDS LIST affirmed today that Iraqi warplanes yesterday hit the Greek tanker "Trade Fortitude" while it was sailing in the northeastern part of the Arabian Gulf after leaving Iran's Khark Island.

In today's edition, LLOYDS LIST, which is issued by the Lloyds insurance company, said that the 249,223-tonne tanker, which was previously called "World Truth," was sold for $10 million last December to Greek establishments whose identity has not been revealed, after it had been previously owned by the Worldwide Shipping Agency.

The newspaper cited shipping sources as saying that the tanker was hit by an Iraqi missile, but losses have not been determined yet.

Shelling of Cities Continues

JN161636 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1617 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Basra, 16 Mar (INA)—In his report this evening, the INA correspondent said that the shells from heavy, long-range Iranian artillery are still falling on residential areas in the cities of Basra, Al-Zubayr, and Al-Qurnah as this report is being prepared.

The correspondent said that the shelling, which has continued throughout the day, has resulted in the injuries to more civilians and damage to houses.

Communique Details Strikes

JN161756 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1700 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Communique No 3,078 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 16 March]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Our missiles will continue to land on the dens of sedition and charlatans. The Al-Husayn missiles will continue to be the wrath of God against those who renounced His religion, committed vice, and practiced all cowardly acts against our cities and citizens. The rulers of Iran must understand today that the kick of the dying mule does not ward off death, but throws it in the abyss of death. The Al-Husayn missiles and the bombs of the Iraqi aircraft will turn the dens of whoever attacks the sanctity of this homeland, the land of this homeland, and the people of this homeland, into ashes. The Iranian rulers must not think that they can send their scoundrels into the incinerator of death so that they continue to be nourished by the woes of the war and mix slavery with politics.

By God, we will wash Tehran's dirt with the sacred Iraqi fire and tear to pieces with our bombs whoever sought sedition, insisted on the war, and maneuvered to confront peace. Here are our missile strikes, which are being poured on them collectively or individually to punish the killers of women and children, and to destroy the dens of ignorance and aggression. The following missile strikes were carried out today:

1. At 0830 [0530 GMT] today, an Al-Husayn missile strike was dealt to the city of Tehran. It is the 16th missile strike since the rulers of Iran have reignited the war of the cities.

2. At the same time, the 17th Al-Husayn missile strike was dealt to the city of Tehran.

3. At the same time, the 18th Al-Husayn missile strike was dealt to the city of Tehran.

4. At the same time, the 19th Al-Husayn missile strike was dealt to the city of Tehran.

5. At 1030 today, the 20th Al-Husayn missile strike was dealt to the city of Tehran.

6. At 1400 today, the 21st Al-Husayn missile strike was dealt to the city of Tehran.

7. At the same time, the 22d Al-Husayn missile strike was dealt to the city of Tehran.

Let us satisfy the Khomeyniites' appetite for death and destruction and let Tehran have its fill of Iraq's fire, so as to remove from it the complexes of history. We will feed it with more fire whenever it is hungry. Blessed be the hands of struggler men of the military industries and the heroic Al-Husayn missile force. We derive resolve and determination from God.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 16 March 1988

Communique Lists Air Raids

JN161945 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1704 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Communique No 3,079 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 16 March]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Let the burning anger pour on whoever seeks evil and goes to it. Let this hell burn the miserable rulers of Iran for what they have done and are doing. Along with the Al-Husayn missiles that are pouring on them, the bombs of the heroic Air Force are distributing death among those who want it in every corner, day and night alike. The following is a roundup of the activities of the valiant Iraqi Air Force last night and today:

1. Our planes flew 312 air raids on the enemy scoundrels in the sector of operations. Our planes killed a large number of them; demolished their positions over them; destroyed their weapons and equipment; set ablaze their ammunition dumps, vehicles, and weapons; and turned Iraq's lofty border into a cemetery for the iron brought by Khomeyni to fight, as it is actually a cemetery for the scoundrels.

2. An accurate and effective hit was dealt to a large maritime target near the Iranian coast yesterday evening.

3. At 1800 [1500 GMT] last night, a destructive blow was dealt to the city of Rasht.

4. At 1900 last night, a destructive blow was dealt to the city of Dezful.

5. At 0730 this morning, our planes launched a destructive raid against the city of Kermanshah [Bakhtaran]

6. While they were flying their missions at 0730, our planes spotted an enemy Bell helicopter. They dealt it an accurate blow and destroyed it.

7. At 0820 this morning, our planes launches destructive raid on the city of (Salahi).

8. At 0858, our planes launched a destructive raid on the city of Daran.

9. Also at 0858 a number of our planes launched a destructive raid on the city of Shadkam.

10. At 0900, our planes launched a destructive raid on the city of Shahpur.

11. At 1011 today, our planes launched a destructive raid on the city of Riza'yah.

12. At the same time, a number of our planes launched another raid on the city of Shahpur.

13. At 1052, our hawks challenged the air defenses of our country's enemies. They launched a blitzkrieg raid on the air defense system in the city of Tabriz and destroyed their targets.

14. At 1100, our planes launched a destructive raid on Tabriz, in northwest Iran.

15. At 1105, our planes launched a destructive raid on the strategic Qotur Bridge, which links Iran with the outside world.

16. At 1312 today, our planes launched a destructive raid on the city of Shiraz.

17. At 1445, our planes launched another destructive raid on the city of Kermanshah.

18. At 1600 today, our planes raided the oil products reservoirs in the city of Bandar-e Mah Shahr. They destroyed the reservoirs and set them ablaze.

Having flown all these missions, all our planes returned safely and triumphantly with God's care and protection. This is Iraq, and this is part of what Iraq can do. Ridiculous and foolish attempts and cheap gimmicks will not save the Khomeyniites from God's torture and Iraq's blows. Blessed be your hands, O rapacious hawks. Honor to our Air Force—commanders, hawks, and other ranks. From God we derive success and assistance.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 16 March 1988

Communique No 3,080

JN161850 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 1709 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Communique No 3,080 issued by the Armed Forces General Command on 16 March]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Our victorious Armed Forces continued to carry out their heroic activities last night and today. The following is a roundup of these activities.

1. The valiant knights of the helicopter gunships dealt lethal strikes to the enemy troop columns stationed near our international borders in the northern operations sector. They spotted an enemy column estimated to number 150 vehicles. They poured their projectiles on the column and managed to destroy most of these vehicles. Elsewhere, the valiant knights of the helicopter gunships attacked the enemy troop concentrations and inflicted losses on them. These losses included 19 vehicles, 10 tanks, and 3 armored personnel carriers.

Our helicopter gunships today flew 171 combat sorties, during which they inflicted the aforementioned losses on the enemy. In addition, they destroyed many of the enemy's positions, equipment, weapons, ammunition dumps, and troop concentrations. Having carried out all of these heroic tasks, they returned safely and victorious to base. Blessed be the knights of the helicopter gunships, as they are good, audacious, and courageous in chasing the adversaries. Praise is also to be heaped on the helicopter gunship force—commanders, knights, officers, and other ranks.

2. Through effective blows dealt with the use of artillery and other weapons, our courageous units in the I Army Corps northern sector managed to inflict the following losses on the enemy:

—Killing and wounding 50 enemy personnel.

—Destroying seven vehicles of various types.

—Destroying one 60-mm mortar.

—Destroying one 57-mm antiaircraft gun and one four-barreled machinegun.

3. One scoundrel was killed, and one infantry position and one observation post were destroyed in the II Army Corps central sector.

4. Three gun emplacements and two infantry positions were destroyed in the VI Army Corps sector east of the Tigris.

5. Two ammunition dumps were blown up and one vehicle and one infantry position were destroyed in the VII Army Corps sector.

6. At 0115 and 0155 [2215 and 2255 GMT on 15 March] after midnight last night and at 1236 today, the tyrannical Iranian rulers fired three missiles on our eternal capital, Baghdad. Each of these missiles landed on a residential quarter, martyring and wounding a number of civilians. A number of our exalted women, our respected elderly people, and our dear children were among those martyred and wounded. The attacks also demolished and damaged a number of houses and other civilian property. Three enemy plans raided Iraqi targets this morning. One raided residential quarters in the Al-Ta'mim Governorate at 0611 today. The other two planes raided residential quarters in the Irbil Governorate at 0614. The enemy air raids martyred and wounded a number of citizens, including many women, children, and elderly people. The raids also destroyed and damaged a number of houses and commercial stores.

The criminal Iranian regime also directed the fire of its long-range artillery last night and today on residential quarters in the cities of Basra, Al-Sulaymaniyah, Al-Zubayr, Al-Qurnah, Khanaqin, Qal'at Dizah, Badrah, Mandali, Al-Harithah, Al-'Uzayr, Darband Khan, and 'Ali al-Gharbi. The enemy shelling martyred and wounded a number of our civilians and demolished and damaged houses, mosques, hospitals, kindergartens, and commercial stores. May our martyrs enjoy eternal paradise as their final abode and may swift recovery be the lot of our wounded, God willing.

[Signed] The Armed Forces General Command, 16 March 1988

Khurmal Area Fighting

JN161937 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1730 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Hasan al-Kashif dispatch from Baghdad]

[Excerpt] The war of the cities is escalating. Iran fired three surface-to-surface missiles at residential areas in Baghdad. I heard their explosions at night and noon. Two Iranian aircraft raided a residential area in Irbil. Another aircraft raided a residential area in Kirkuk. Yesterday, an Iranian aircraft attempted to raid Al-'Amarah, but the Iraqi air defenses shot it down. The Iraqi Air Force today downed an Iranian Bell helicopter. The Iraqi border towns are being continuously shelled by the Iranian artillery.

A battle is also taking place in the Khurmal area in northern Iraq. The Iranians are trying to advance, but the Iraqis are confronting them and cushioning their offensive. This was confirmed to us by 'Abd al-Jabbar Muhsin, director of political guidance in the Iraqi Army. [passage omitted]

Plane Downing Denied 16 Mar

JN161920 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1855 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Baghdad, 16 Mar (INA)—An Iraqi military spokesman has denied Iranian claims that an Iraqi aircraft was shot down today. In a statement to INA, the military spokesman affirmed that all Iraqi aircraft flying missions today safely returned to base. The spokesman challenged the Iranian rulers to produce one bit of evidence to substantiate their claims.

23d Missile Strike

JN170719 Baghdad Voice of the Masses in Arabic 0700 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Statement by a military spokesman dated 17 March]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. With God's help, we continue to pound the Iranian regime's dens. This regime's heads had better remain hidden beneath the painful Iraqi strikes; they began the aggression, insisted on continuing it, ignited the cities' war, expanded it, and resumed it after Iraq stopped it, and they continued their aggression instead of accepting peace. Cosequently, our painful missile strikes have continued.

At 0930 [0630 GMT] today, the 23d missile strike with Al-Husayn missiles was launched at the city of Tehran. Blessed be you, O men of the military industries and the Al-Husayn missile force, who work day and night. For you, comfort and happiness lie in destroying the enemy. May God reward you like he rewards the faithful believers.

[Dated] 17 March 1988

Plane Downings Denied

JN171006 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0955 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Baghdad, 17 Mar (INA)—An Iraqi military spokesman has denied a Tehran radio report that two Iraqi planes were downed this morning. In a statement to INA today, the spokesman said we are accustomed to hearing such false allegations by the Iranian rulers every now and then. These allegations irrefutably confirm the Iranian regime's failure to confront Iraq's capability and its overwhelming superiority.

Iranian Reports 'Baseless'

JN171032 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0958 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Baghdad, 17 Mar (INA)—An Iraqi military official has said that Iranian reports about clashes between Iraqi and Iranian forces in the Halabjah and Khurmal areas are baseless.

The director of political guidance at the Ministry of Defense added in a statement to INA that Iraqi forces do not exist in those two areas, which have been cleared of Iraqi units.

The director described Iranian reports about fighting and clashes between Iraqi and Iranian units as an attempt by the Iranian regime to "justify its despicable crime of destroying the town of Halabjah and nearby villages, which the Iranian units occupied and destroyed."

The director added that the Iranian regime is bent on destroying Iraqi cities by various means, using all kinds of unconvincing excuses. He concluded his statement by saying that the brave Iraqi Armed Forces are in full control of all operation sectors. Following is the text of the statement:

Commenting on Iranian enemy reports and claims that fighting is taking place between Iraqi and enemy units in the Halabjah and Khurmal region, the director of political guidance in the Iraqi Ministry of Defense said in a statement to INA that these reports are baseless, because these areas have been cleared of our units. Our units do not exist there. Therefore, enemy claims that fighting and clashes are taking place there between Iraqi and Iranian units are an attempt to justify its despicable crime of destroying the town of Halabjah and nearby villages, which its units occupied and destroyed.

Thus, the Iranian regime is bent on destroying our towns by various means, using all kinds of unconvincing excuses.

The director of political guidance concluded his statement by saying: Our brave Armed Forces are in full control of all operation sectors.

Northern Towns Raided

JN171115 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1059 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Baghdad, 17 Mar (INA)—Two Iranian planes penetrated Iraq's international borders in the northern sector, targeting residential areas in the towns of Kuysanjaq and Al-'Amadiyah at 0741 [0441 GMT] and 1045 today. A military spokesman told INA that the aggression martyred a number of civilians, including chilren, women, and old people, and also demolished and damaged several houses, shops, and other civilian property.

IDF Planes Attack 'Terrorist' Targets in Lebanon
TA171043 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1030 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Israeli Air Force aircraft this afternoon launched an attack on terrorist targets in the mountain area south of Beirut. All our planes returned safely to their bases. The pilots reported that the targets had been destroyed.

The attacked targets served as bases for planning and launching terrorist operations against Israel.

This was the announcement of the IDF spokesman.

Shamir: 'Disagreement Does Not Mean Conflict'
TA170606 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0505 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] With the completion of his talks in Washington, Prime Minister Shamir and his aides did their best to present the visit in positive terms. First of all, disagreement does not mean there is a conflict, the prime minister told our correspondent Shim'on Schiffer.

[Begin recording] [Shamir] I cannot point to anything that could indicate a part of the plan has been changed, but I think this was to be expected, because the U.S. Administration has not yet received the replies of the other parties to the process. I assume my explanations are being weighed and discussed.

[Schiffer] From your point of view, how do you interpret President Reagan's statement that those who say no will have to answer to their own people?

[Shamir] First, you should ask President Reagan what significance he attaches to these remarks; and second, we must not forget that he found it necessary to emphasize that he does not include me in that category.

[Schiffer] What, then, is your message to Israel after this visit? What did you face in Washington? How would you like the visit to be perceived in Israel?

[Shamir] First, I have presented my own position and that of the people I represent in what I believe is an appropriate way. Second, I made a great effort to guarantee that even in the event of disagreements between us and the United States, the friendly relations and cooperation which have always characterized these relations will continue in the future. [end recording]

Peres Office Satisfied With Reagan Remarks
TA170945 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 17 Mar 88 p 1

[Report by political correspondent 'Aqiva Eldar]

[Text] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres' office expressed satisfaction last night with President Reagan's comments at the end of his meeting with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir. Labor Party circles particularly emphasized that President Reagan said those who say "nay" to the U.S. peace initiative bear a responsibility for this vis-a-vis their people.

Rabin Interviewed on Peace Process, Unrest
OW161547 Tokyo NHK General Television Network in Japanese 1220 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Interview with Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin by NHK announcer Taro Kimura; Kimura reports from NHK television studio in Tokyo, Rabin's location not given; interview in English with simultaneous Japanese translation—live]

[Text] [Kimura] Defense Minister Rabin, shalom, and thank you very much for joining our program.

[Rabin] Thank you for having me on your program and shalom to you.

[Kimura] Mr Minister, Prime Minister Shamir in Washington, I understand, said he has a proposal of his own. You, Mr Minister, being a key member of the cabinet, must have been consulted beforehand. Were you?

[Rabin] Well, as you know, Prime Minister Shamir has gone to Washington without a formal decision being taken either in the plenary government or in the cabinet about whether to accept or reject Secretary Shultz' initiative. The decision will be made only after the return of Prime Minister Shamir from Washington, I assume, at the middle of next week.

[Kimura] Mr Minister, you being the most responsible administrator of the occupied land, you must have your own view for resolving these problems. What is that?

[Rabin] Well, you are right. As the minister of defense I am the minister that [is] responsible in the name of the government of Israel for running the territories—Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza. What we have faced in the last 100 days is a new phenomena of violence that we did not experience in the 40 years of Israel's independence. In the past we faced wars initiated by the armed forces of the Arab countries. We have faced and are forced everyday to cope with terrorism of the PLO terrorist organizations and others, but a violence by civilians in territories under our military government is new to us. This

violence's purpose is to achieve political goals. Therefore, my role as a minister of defense [is] to use the armed forces within the limit of the law to bring about tranquillity, not a solution. Solution can be achieved only by diplomatic means.

[Kimura] But, you Mr Minister, you, of course, are aware of the international criticism of the brutality of your soldiers which resulted in nearly 100 deaths already.

[Rabin] Well, I am aware that since we have to cope by uniform people—by soldier, by border policemen, civilians, sometimes including women and children, it does not look nice, but what choice has Israel got? But to give in to violence, to run away, by no means, no. Israel will never give in to violence. Therefore, we have to use force against violence. Since we have to cope with civilians, we don't use our air force, our tank force, or our artillery force. We use soldiers basically as policemen. This is why it looks more like a clash between civilians and uniformed people who operate more as policemen.

[Kimura] Sir, if my memory is correct, you have promised that you will punish the soldiers with wrong conduct. This is my question: How many have been put behind bars? For example, there was a case of burying a Palestinian man alive.

[Rabin] No one was burying a Palestinian alive. Four soldiers, the highest rank was sergeant major, asked somebody to pour some earth on three Palestinians. Not over their heads, otherwise they would not be alive. All of them are behind bars, everyone that was involved in the incident. And there are others that were used beating after the Palestinian that was involved in violence was caught by them. [sentence as heard] Beating is not allowed after the Palestinian demonstrator, or stone thrower, or Molotov cocktail thrower is caught.

[Kimura] Are you saying that those who crashed the bones of the Palestinian which we witnessed through a CBS news coverage, were the soldiers being also put behind the bars?

[Rabin] Well, the famous incident you saw on the CBS special, none of the Palestinians had even the slightest crack in his bones. Not one of them had even a tip of his finger broken. They were beaten and two soldiers were brought before a court martial.

[Kimura] I see. Well now coming to the news coverage, you have authorized to ban the coverage of certain hot places or trouble places. This is often compared with the measures taken by the South African Government. Do you think this is a fair comparison?

[Rabin] By no means, no, because in South Africa there is no coverage of anything. In our case, only for military purposes, we can close an area and we authorize our military commanders to do it. Once a military area is closed, it is closed before everybody who is not living there or is not a member of the forces that have to cope with the problem. [sentence as heard] We have no special law to cope with the media.

[Kimura] Sir, lastly, I would like to ask you some philosophical question. We know the Jewish people have gone through a terrible ordeal in the past. If there is a people who understands the pain of oppressed peoples, it must be the Jewish people. Is the pain of the Palestinians different from yours?

[Rabin] Well, I believe the Jewish (?faith) people are very sensitive to the pain of others whenever they are ready to put an end to war, terror, and violence and to establish relations of peace. Because the Jewish people were for 2,000 years without a land, without a home, the wandering Jew was the target for all kinds of attacks and genocides. We are more than eager to find a peaceful solution which will allow us to live here in Israel in peace within a Jewish state. From 1947 when the United Nations took the partition resolution, we were always for peace and our hand to peace was always rejected by the Arab world and the Palestinians.

[Kimura] Well, Defense Minister Rabin, I really hope you find that peace in the region, and thank you very much for joining us tonight.

[Rabin] Thank you very much.

Rabin Considers Future Borders

TA162050 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said the situation in the territories will calm down long before terrorism is eradicated in Lebanon. It has been 6 years since the war, Rabin said, and the main objective of eradicating terrorism has not yet been attained. In a speech to students in Jerusalem, Rabin lashed out against those who expect some magic trick to calm the situation in the territories. Our correspondent Beni Liss reports on the defense minister's remarks:

[Begin recording] [Liss] In anticipation of his appearance today, students of the Bet Hinukh school in Jerusalem prepared a list of questions for the defense minister concerning the IDF's morality, the policy of beatings, the international conference, and relations between the IDF and the media. Expanding on a peace plan, the defense minister drew the map of Israel as he perceives it in the context of a peace agreement.

[Rabin] What am I opposed to? I am against a PLO-Palestinian state between Israel and Jordan under any circumstances whatsoever, and that is why I am against negotiations with the PLO under any circumstances whatsoever; I am against a withdrawal to the 1967 borders under any circumstances whatsoever. I am for keeping metropolitan Jerusalem united under Israel's

sovereignty and as its eternal capital, for keeping the Jordan River as the security border, for changes rather than adjustments in the 1967 borders.

I will not draw you a map here. What I am basically talking about is the Jerusalem area, Gush 'Ezyon, the Jordan Rift Valley, changes opposite the Green Line, opposite Netanya, along with a willingness to hand over densely populated Palestinian areas to foreign sovereignty, to Jordan, in the context of a peace agreement.

I am against uprooting settlements. Within an agreement, I am in favor of Jewish settlements being allowed to exist as Israeli settlements under foreign sovereignty. The same is true for that portion of the territories that will come under Israel's sovereignty, in which Palestinians holding Jordanian citizenship will be given the choice of taking Israeli citizenship or retaining their Jordanian citizenship, as is the case today with most of the inhabitants of East Jerusalem who live under Israeli sovereignty.

[Liss] Nevertheless, Rabin noted that until any agreement is reached, the current punitive measures are insufficient. That is why henceforth they will be combined with economic measures that will make things tough for the population. Consequently, Rabin hopes, peace will be restored in the territories. [end recording]

Sharon on Solutions, 'Chasm,' Peres, Eban

TA161111 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 16 Mar 88 p 2

[Report by Knesset correspondent Dvora Getzler]

[Text] A relaxed, ebullient Ari'el Sharon, declaring that he "definitely" saw himself as a future candidate for prime minister, warned yesterday that the situation in which "the government speaks with two voices" invites war. Israel, he continued, was "from day to day losing its capacity to surprise" the enemy.

Sharon's remarks on his ambitions to become premier came in response to a question on that point. But, Sharon said, for the moment Yitzhaq Shamir was his party's candidate in the coming election.

But in a hard-hitting question-and-answer session with a forum comprised of spokesmen of government departments, the industry and trade minister gave no evidence that he himself was attempting to bridge the chasm that divides the government.

On the contrary: Sharon, speaking in tones that brooked no argument, let fly at Foreign Minsiter Shim'on Peres as "the man who more than any other has weakened Israel's ability (to cope with the rioting in the administered territories).

"He (Peres), who keeps insisting that the only way to solve the problem is by a diplomatic process, is simply preventing us from dealing with the issue in any other way," Sharon asserted. "It is on him (Peres) that I pin the major responsibility," he went on, accusing Peres of "presenting Israel as weak and divided," and of "cynically exploiting' the current unrest "to push his line, a line that is not government policy."

Asked whether he did not think that expressions such as "Peres is a traitor" increased the divisions within society, Sharon hit back by reminding the audience of accusations of "murderer" levelled at him (after the Sabra and Shatila massacre in 1982, for which the Kahan Commission of Inquiry found him indirectly responsible).

Regarding Abba Eban's visit to the U.S., Sharon, who did not mention Eban's name, said it was a "very serious" matter, but not the first such manifestation of what he implied was disloyalty to the government by that same person.

Indicating that he was not at liberty to say more, Sharon said that "documents were captured in Beirut" that attested to what "that man" and "others" had said in critism of government policy "to Arabs during the war itself."

The slur against the Labour ministers continued when another questioner asked how Israel should respond to recent European Economic Community refusals to implement trade deals.

"How can one wonder at the Europeans," Sharon asked. "For the past two years, and certainly in the past few months, a succession of Israeli emissaries have been despatched—younger or not so young, good-looking and not so good-looking—to explain to everyone possible that Israel must be pressured by every means possible to participate in an international conference—and all this behind the government's back, and at the behest of Shim'on Peres, who has spared no effort to initiate such pressures to make us accept a programme that we see as catastrophe."

During the meeting, Sharon threatened to retaliate against the decision by the European Community's parliament to reject trade accords with Israel because of its handling of the unrest in the territories.

"I don't believe Israel can just take this punishment. It must certainly respond, and we are now definitely thinking of a series of steps we can also take—as much as we are able since Israel is a small country," Sharon said. "(Israel) cannot accept these sanctions without reacting to them."

Sharon gave no details of what reciprocal actions were being considered. Israel's trade deficit with the community grew by 82 per cent last year to a record $3.7 billion.

His comment on the likelihood that war would result from the divisions within the government was his Parthian shot. But before that he fielded a number of other questions.

Comparing the way he coped with riots in the Gaza District shortly after the Six Day War, Sharon asserted that part of the problem in putting down the present uprising was the reluctance of some members of the government to act firmly enough because, regrettably, "we are no longer the same Jews!"

When a member of the audience retorted, "And they are not the same Arabs!" Sharon hit back quickly, "You are quite wrong!"

One of his major recommendations for coping with the uprising, Sharon said, was legislation to deport "every rioter who lifts a hand against an IDF soldier."

When it was suggested that that would result in the expulsion of thousands, Sharon repeated his Gaza formula of nearly two decades ago: deport the parents of a few rioters—"and I don't think there were more than 20 or 25"—and the riots would be at an end. All that would be heard, he said, were "the howls of the Arab youngsters being beaten by their parents."

Sharon took issue with such terms as "revolt" and "uprising," which should certainly not be used by such government bodies as Galei Zahal (IDF Radio)," he insisted. "The proper term is rioters!"

Regarding Sharon's address to the spokesmen of government departments, the foreign minister's office last night released a statement saying that this was the Likud's 85th slanderous attack on Labour and its leader, with Sharon leading the way.

"A party that is not capable of offering genuine solutions does not know how to argue the issues," the statement went on. "These attacks have become customary, part of the cut-throat competition among Herut that the nation witnessed during their convention.

"Regarding the specific charges, it is not surprising that these lies came from the man that brought Israel to catastrophe. If it were up to him, he would bring us to another catastrophe.

"No one gets upset about him, no one is frightened by him."

[Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew on 16 March 88 on page 25 adds the following information to its report on Sharon's address:

"The Jordan River constitutes Israel's eastern security border, with IDF troops to be deployed along it.

No foreign military force, including UN forces, is to be present west of the Jordan River.

Israel will bear sole responsibility for security in greater Israel.

There will be no foreign sovereignty over any part of Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip.

No second Palestinian state will be established west of the Jordan. The only Palestinian state is the one on the other side of the Jordan River.

The refugee problem will be solved as part of a political settlement in the area.

The Golan Heights are an integral part of Israel.

The Arab population in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip will be granted autonomy to conduct its internal affairs, and the citizens of Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip will retain their present nationality."]

Peres Attacks EC Decision on Peace Negotiations

TA161435 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1300 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Vice Prime Minister Shim'on Peres says that from a security point of view it would be better not to waste energy on controlling a foreign nation of 1.5 million people. It would be better to enter negotiations for peace. Mr Peres was in the Knesset, responding to seven motions on the European Parliament's decision against Israel.

Our correspondent Gil'ad Sher reports that the foreign minister said the decision is a blow to the peace process, but stressed that Israel would continue to honor agreements to which it is a signatory and expects the same from the European Parliament. The foreign minister's speech was interrupted by Knesset members David Magen and 'Uzi Landau of the Likud. Mr Peres responded by saying that some Knesset members are in a trance of slander and smears, and will pay for it in the elections.

The Knesset plenum made do with the foreign minister's statement, and the issue will not be raised again.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1330 GMT on 16 March adds the following on Peres' remarks in the Knesset: "Peres said if Israel rejects the Shultz initiative we will return to escalation, and the arms race in the Middle East will be renewed." IDF Radio further adds:

(Begin Peres recording) Mr Speaker, I view the decision by the European Parliament not to ratify the protocols as a blow to the peace process, because this decision shows signs of a desire to punish or impose something. No self-respecting nation will operate out of fear of punishment, nor will it make a decision because of an attempt

to coerce. There must be free peace negotiations between parties capable of carrying out decisions without outside coercion. Foreign involvement can bridge gaps and help, but if this involvement tries to force the sides into something, it will only anger them." (end recording)].

7 'Terrorists' Killed in Hizballah-SLA Clash

TA161921 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Seven Shi'ite terrorists were killed in southern Lebanon in a fierce battle between South Lebanese Army [SLA] fighters and the Hizballah. Two SLA fighters were wounded, our radio monitor Mikha'el Gurdus reports. Nine people were killed in SLA shelling on Shi'ite positions in the Jazzin area.

SLA Positions Attacked

TA170546 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0500 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] South Lebanese Army [SLA] positions in the security zone were attacked with mortar fire and RPG's last night. The SLA soldiers sustained no casualties. Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports that Amal commanders in Tyre claim that the katyushas that landed in the Galilee yesterday were fired by Hizballah people who were hired by the Fatah command in Sidon.

No Casualties in Katyusha Attack on Galilee

TA161543 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1500 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Several katyusha shells were fired into the Galilee this morning. There were no casualties and little damage. Our correspondent Yo'el Dar reports this is the third time in the past 6 weeks that Katyushas have landed in the Galilee. These were 122-mm katyushas, and were fired from outside the security zone.

Major General Yosi Peled, commander of the Northern Command, told our correspondent that he cannot give assurances that further Katyushas will not fall in the Galilee, but stressed that the IDF has done everything it can to make sure Katyusha attacks are limited.

Jordan Sees PLO as Partner in Peace Process

TA151758 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 13 Mar 88 pp 1, 11

[Editorial: "The PLO Is a Pan-Arab Partner in All Efforts"]

[Text] Most news agencies as well as Western diplomats have affirmed that Jordan succeeded in persuading the United States to substitute the word "states" mentioned in the Middle East settlement plan with the word "sides" so the PLO would be able to participate in the peace process.

Thus Jordan expressed its clear conviction, without any ambiguity, that the PLO must take part in any peace process as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

The invitation by King Husayn to the PLO leader to visit Amman is more proof that Jordan wishes to hold consultations with the PLO, similar to those held with other Arab states, to adopt a unified stance toward the Shultz plan.

We are certain the PLO is fully aware that Jordan will not deviate from the Arab consensus and that it is committed to the Arab summit's resolutions regarding the PLO and the conditions for a peaceful settlement.

The pan-Arab position adhered to by Jordan, Syria, and Egypt regarding the proposed peace moves and plans is the threshold where all efforts aimed at separating Arab positions break down. We believe this pan-Arab position is the one capable of protecting Palestinian rights, land, and identity.

The PLO, which is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, derives its legitimacy from the Palestinian masses' support for it. Moreover, its reliance on a pan-Arab position provides it with a stimulus in the Arab arena.

On this premise, the cohesion of the Syrian and Palestinian positions as well as the special relationship between the Jordanian and Palestinian people are but a triangle with equal sides. The two sides of the triangle represent the firmness of the pan-Arab Jordanian-Syrian position and the steadfastness of the Palestinian people in confronting the occupation and its settlement plans. The base of the triangle is Palestinian national consensus represented by the PLO, which expresses the Palestinian people's aspirations for freedom and the right to self-determination.

PLO Office Closure in New York Condemned

TA161710 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 15 Mar 88 pp 1, 11

[Editorial: "Our Cause Is in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Not in New York"]

[Text] Were a sane person to characterize the U.S. Administration's decision to close the PLO office in New York, the least he would say is that it is a short-sighted and silly decision indicative of the narrowmindedness governing U.S. political decisionmaking.

The U.S. Administration imagines that closing the PLO office will invalidate the Palestinian presence all over the globe. The U.S. Administration believes that preventing the Palestinian voice from expressing itself in the United Nations will silence the voice of the Palestinian people

throughout the world. The U.S. Administration thinks that with the absence of the PLO representative from UN halls, the Palestinian presence everywhere will vanish.

We have no intention of complaining about the U.S. decision, because those who complain are weak. Nor do we cry at the closure of the PLO office in New York, because those who cry demand the compassion and sympathy of U.S. policy.

Whether the U.S. Administration accepts them or not, the Palestinians exist with their voices, minds, hearts, and bodies. The Palestinians are able to impose their presence both on the Americans and on others.

The Palestinians are not members of a charity society who are present in Washington and New York to beg for U.S. charity, nor are they hanging around waiting for U.S. support.

The Palestinians are waiting neither for U.S. recognition, U.S. acceptance, nor a U.S. invitation. The Palestinians are a human reality with political force, national goals, and pan-Arab backing. This reality is stronger than any U.S. decision and brighter than any U.S. luster.

Let Washington close down all PLO offices in the U.S. capital and in the UN headquarters. Let U.S. policy prevent free Palestinian voices from addressing the American people and informing them of the facts. Let U.S. policy concoct any kind of decisions, punishment, and restrictions against the Palestinians.

We do not exist by means of a U.S. certificate. We are people who have an identity and a cause not by the consent of the United States. We are Palestinians by the testimony of history, the rationale of geography, and by resisting and enduring the coldness of winter and the heat of summer.

So you Americans, take the PLO offices in Washington and New York and give them to the Jewish Defense League, but we are and will remain here on Palestinian land. Our homeland, our cause, our dreams, and our issues are here in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, not in New York or Washington.

Demjanjuk Trial Reopens To Hear New Evidence

TA161101 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 16 Mar 88 p 1

[Report by Ernie Neyer]

[Excerpt] The Demjanjuk war crimes trial is being reopened to hear new evidence by the defence.

At a hearing at the Jerusalem District Court yesterday, at which the accused was present, the court decided to hold an additional full session at Binyene Ha'uma [National Convention Halls] next Monday at 8:30 am. [passage omitted]

PRC's Wu Supports International Conference

TA170940 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 17 Mar 88 p 2

[Report by London-based correspondent Victor Levi]

[Text] The PRC is interested in taking part in an international conference on the Middle East, but will not establish diplomatic relations with Israel as long as the latter does not change its policies. These remarks were made yesterday by PRC Minister of Foreign Affairs Wu Xueqian to HADASHOT, at the end of the minister's visit to Britain.

Xueqian said Beijing favors the convening of an international conference as the only way to end the conflict in the area. He added that diplomatic relations between the two countries will be feasible only if Israel adopts a different approach to the problems in the area. He refused to say whether his country would recognize Israel in order to participate in the international forum. The minister, who returned to Beijing yesterday, stressed: "We support the Palestinian struggle."

RAKAH Delegation Meets Soviet Officials

TA171003 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0930 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] The Soviet Union is skeptical about the Shultz plan's chances. This statement was made by senior Politburo officials to the RAKAH delegation, headed by Knesset Member Me'ir Wilner, which is currently in Moscow. In a meeting with Politburo Member Yegor Ligachev, regarded as the Soviet No 2 man, the international conference was discussed. [Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 0900 GMT on 17 March adds that the meeting "was also attended by former Ambassador to Washington Anatoliy Dobrynin."] The Soviets said the conference is the only way to hold negotiations, and that the Shultz plan stands no chance because of the U.S. refusal to include the PLO.

Our correspondent Dov Gilhar reports that the two sides also discussed Israeli-Soviet relations and the situation of Jews in the Soviet Union.

Official Denies U.S. Report on Mengele

TA151650 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1600 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] As far as Israel is concerned, the Josef Mengele file is still open and there is no basis to reports that the body of the Nazi criminal has been identified in Brazil. This was announced in an official communique made by the Justice Ministry director general in reaction to reports

published in THE NEW YORK TIMES. Our correspondent reports that Dr Maurice Rogev, director of the Health Ministry forensic institute, indeed examined the remains of a body in Brazil last year, but he did not reach the conclusion that it was the body of Josef Mengele. Israel is still in contact with the authorities in the United States, Brazil, and West Germany in order to receive more information.

Greek Parliamentarians Voice 'Harsh Criticism'

TA170643 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0500 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Five Greek parliamentarians wrapped up a tour of the territories yesterday with harsh criticism of the authorities. They said, among other things, that they observed hunger and a shortage of medicines in the territories, and they would therefore launch a campaign in their country to raise funds and to sign up volunteer physicians.

They also said that in the present situation, they see no room for a normalization of diplomatic relations with Israel, and will propose to the Greek Parliament that it exert pressure on Israel through international bodies to change its policy.

Rabin on Measures in Territories, Illegal Orders

TA161229 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1105 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Defense Minister Rabin spoke with Jerusalem high school students today. 'Adi Malul listened to Minister Rabin's talk with those who will be soldiers by this coming summer.

[Begin recording] [Malul] The defense minister indeed made a lengthy appearance before Jerusalem high school students. The students asked about political issues, as well as the unrest in the territories. Have the punitive measures in the territories proven themselves? The defense minister said: Not entirely, because the situation is not yet calm, but we are now exercising new, economic measures.

[Rabin] Today—not only today, but in recent weeks—we are trying to combine the use of economic measures with the use of administrative measures and force, as allowed by law.

[Malul] We cannot allow soldiers to refuse to serve in one place or another, Rabin says, and likewise we cannot allow civilians to take the law into their own hands. As for the issue of illegal orders, he said:

[Rabin] I want to say that I know of almost no case—perhaps two or three cases at most throughout this period of unrest in the territories—of a complaint about an illegal order. There have been problems with regard to the extent to which orders have been correctly interpreted. Still, I know of hardly any complaints from soldiers about receiving illegal orders to carry out.

[Malul] The defense minister was also asked what territorial concessions he would be prepared for. To this he answered: I am interested in a Jewish state, not a binational or Palestinian state between Israel and the Jordan River. Therefore, he said, I say no to negotiations with the PLO, but I am also not prepared to have 2 million Arabs alongside 3.5 million Jews. They would then constitute 38 percent of the Knesset voters. [end recording]

Bar-Lev Says Police Dealing With Resignations

TA161552 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1500 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] The police affairs minister said the police have organized to deal with the situation created by the resignations of local policemen in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip. Minister Bar-Lev said the police are currently working out a new order of priorities, while continuing efforts to persuade the policemen who have decided to resign to rescind their decisions.

Our correspondent Amnon Nadav reports that the police affairs minister spoke in the Knesset in response to motions on the issue by Knesset members Ge'ula Kohen and Dov Shilansky. Minister Bar-Lev recalled that the police do not plan to close stations in the territories, but that those manned only by local policemen will not be manned by Israelis in the future.

More on Unrest, Related Incidents in Teritories

IDF Closes Shops in W. Bank

TA171146 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] In several areas of Judaea and Samaria, the military government this morning forced Arab shopkeepers to close their stores. The soldiers told the merchants they could open their shops beginning at noon. Our reporter says the step is intended to break the power of the underground Palestinian leadership. Radical groups have ordered shops to stay shut except for 3 hours in the morning, but our reporter says the military government now intends to set business hours.

[Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew on 17 March on page 2 carries a report by Roni Shaqed, Hayim Broida, Yitzhaq Ravyihya, and Tzvi Zinger on the punitive measures adopted by the IDF in the territories, adding that "the export licenses will be granted selectively, and vegetable exports to Jordan from various areas will be banned. Electricity will be cut off for a limited period in regions where severe riots take place. This measure has already been exercised in the Al-Jalazun refugee camp."]

Funds From Jordan Regulated

TA161557 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1500 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] A new administrative measure has been adopted against the riots in the territories. The Civilian Administration has decided to limit the transfer of money across the Jordan River bridges, and from now on only 400 dinars per person will be permitted to be transferred. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that this is aimed at preventing the transfer of PLO money to fund hostile activities.

Mubarak 'Awwad Arrested

TA161610 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Excerpts] One person has been killed and over 10 injured in riots in Judaea and Samaria this afternoon. 'Eran Ben-Porat reports:

The death of the 70-year old man from the Nur al-Shams refugee camp near Tulkarm is still being investigated by the IDF. Arab sources say he was asphyxiated as a result of breathing tear gas. Seven inhabitants of Nur al-Shams were apparently wounded by shots fired by IDF soldiers while dispersing violent demonstrations in the camp this afternoon.

There were many disturbances in the Tulkarm area today. Three other people were injured in Al-Fawwar near Hebron during disturbances in the village. There were also riots elsewhere, including the Al-Jalazun refugee camp and in Baqah al-Sharqiyah. [passage omitted]

Mubarak 'Awwad, head of the Center for the Study of Nonviolence, was arrested by the Jerusalem Police this afternoon while taking part in an illegal assembly on Nabulus Road [in East Jerusalem]. Our police affairs correspondent Shlomo Stein points out that at the beginning of the week the High Court of Justice issued an interim injunction ordering the interior minister to show cause within 60 days why he would not deport 'Awwad, whose visa has expired.

Released After Questioning

TA170538 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0500 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] The head of the Palestine Center for Nonviolence, Mubarak 'Awwad, was released last night by Jerusalem police following questioning. He was charged with trying to organize an illegal demonstration in the Arab suburb 'Isawiyah.

Strike Under Way in Bethlehem

TA150926 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0900 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] A general strike, including public transportation, is under way in Bethlehem today, after Leaflet No 10 of the Unified National Command of the Uprising called on the population to hold a 2-day strike. Most laborers did not leave for work in Israel today. Our correspondent Arye Gus notes that police checkpoints in the city are manned by Israeli soldiers rather than by local policemen.

Our correspondent reports that youths are throwing stones at passing cars from rooftops in the Al-Duhayshah refugee camp.

2 Khan Yunus Residents Wounded

TA161826 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1800 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Two residents of the Khan Yunus refugee camp were wounded by IDF fire this afternoon. A military source told our correspondent Moti Amir that a curfew was imposed on the camp today. After rioters broke the curfew, security forces tried to disperse them with tear gas, rubber bullets and shots in the air, finally shooting at the rioters' legs. As a result, two inhabitants were wounded.

A curfew was also imposed on several sectors of the Rafah refugee camp at noon. A curfew on the entire Gaza Strip will begin at 2200.

A 60-year old resident of the Nur al-Shams refugee camp died in a Tulkarm hospital after suffering a heart attack. Military sources confirmed to our correspondent Arye Gus that the man was asphyxiated by tear gas while the riot was being dispersed. Seven other people were wounded in the same incident. During the man's funeral another demonstration broke out, with tear gas being used again. A curfew was imposed on Tulkarm, its refugee camp, and on Nur al-Shams. A curfew was also imposed on Al-Jalazun refugee camp near Ramallah, while the curfew on Qalqilyah continues.

2 More Palestinians Killed

TA161911 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Two more Arab inhabitants of the territories were killed during riots today; their bodies were transferred to local hospitals. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that one came from the village of Ya'bud, the other from the village of Nazlat 'Isa. The IDF is investigating the circumstances of their deaths.

Bombs Explode in Jerusalem

TA162035 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 2000 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] A firebomb was thrown at a police vehicle in Jerusalem's Abu Tor neighborhood. Our correspondent Moshe Nussbaum reports that there were no casualties and no damage was caused.

Two buses driving the Jerusalem-Hebron route were pelted with rocks in Halhul this evening. Our correspondent Avshalom Ginosar was told that one passenger in each of the buses was slightly injured.

A roadside bomb exploded in Gaza's Al-Shaja'iyah neighborhood while an IDF patrol was driving by. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that there were no casualties and no damage was caused.

Tulkarm Curfew Lifted

TA170531 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0500 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] The curfew on the town of Tulkarm and the adjacent refugee camps was lifted an hour ago. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that the curfew is continuing in Qalqilyah, 'Azzun, and the Al-Jalazun and Janin refugee camps.

Molotov cocktails were thrown at several Israeli cars in various Judea and Samaria areas during the night. Nobody was hurt, and no damage was caused.

Arrests in Tulkarm After Riots

TA171025 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1000 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Several arrests were made last night in Tulkarm, following yesterday's riots. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that the list of detainees includes 'Abd al-Nasir Salah, deputy chairman of the Palestinian Writers and Poets Association in the territories. Association Chairman Mutawakil Taha has been in detention for the last 2 months.

W. Bank, Gaza Strip 'Calm'

TA171129 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1100 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] A Molotov cocktail was thrown a short while ago at an Israeli truck on the Jerusalem-Ramallah highway, near the 'Atarot junction. Our correspondent Moshe Nussbaum reports that there were no casualties, but the front of the truck went up in flames. IDF units were summoned to the scene.

In Samaria, the curfew on Janin remains in force, as does the blockade on Qabatiyah and the village of Yamun. Our correspondent Gabi Zohar reports that the Ya'bud resident killed in yesterday's riots was buried today.

The Gaza Strip has been calm today. Many workers left for work, and there is some commercial and school activity. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that the dissemination of anti-Israeli leaflets continues in the Gaza Strip.

Arabs Given Prison Terms

TA161300 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1105 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Report by Gabi Zohar]

[Text] The police arrested more than 200 Israeli Arabs following Peace Day incidents last December; 25 are still under arrest. Peace Day was aimed at expressing solidarity with the Arabs in the territories, and included clashes with the police in the Galilee and the Triangle.

Here is another reminder of that day. Seven residents of Umm al-Fahm and Kefar 'Ara in the Triangle were given prison sentences of between 78 days and 18 months. The seven were convicted of illegal assembly, rioting, interfering with the police in the performance of their duties, and damage to property. One of the seven, Muhammad Yunus of Kefar 'Ara, who was given an 18-month sentence, is a U.S. citizen. He was accused of attacking policemen.

The events in Judaea and Samaria continue to have an influence on Israeli Arabs. Last night, two minors from Umm al-Fahm were detained on suspicion of painting nationalist slogans on the Abu Sayna school in the village, and a PLO flag was painted on the wall of a building. This is the second time protest artists have decorated walls in Umm al-Fahm with PLO flags lately. There was a similar incident in Nazareth: nationalist slogans were painted on the wall of a shoe store. Valley District Police have started to investigate all these incidents.

Syria's Kan'an Views Reform Plan Proposals

NC162032 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 2000 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Brigadier General Ghazi Kan'an, head of Syrian intelligence in Lebanon, continued with his visit to West Beirut to obtain views on the reform plan proposed by the regime. For this reason, he met this evening with Speaker Husayn al-Husayni and Acting Prime Minister Dr Salim al-Huss. Afterwards, at 2100, he arrived at the home of Nabih Birri, minister of state for southern affairs.

Following his meeting with Dr Salim al-Huss, Brig Gen Kan'an said: The regime has presented a working paper; the other concerned parties—Speaker al-Husayni, Acting Prime Minister al-Huss, and Ministers Birri and Walid Junblatt—have given their replies. In light of these replies, the regime has presented another paper. We are sounding out the opposition's observations on it. The dialogue is continuing, and we are hoping for the best. The regime's seriousness is the basis for ending the problem, he added.

In response to a question on whether the regime's working paper is limited to definite points or is all-embracing, he said: It is an all-embracing paper on political reforms, particularly on the issues of participation and the abolishment of political sectarianism.

Asked who will convey the replies, he said: The Americans were the ones to present the regime's proposals. Therefore, these observations will be given to the Americans for handing over to the regime.

Syrian Security Zone 'Probe' Causes Concern

TA161310 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 16 Mar 88 pp 1,2

[Report by northern correspondent Shim'on Weiss]

[Excerpt] Military sources in southern Lebanon yesterday expressed concern over the entrance of a Syrian force into the Shi'ite village of Suhmur, in the eastern border section of the security zone. Despite the relatively small size of the Syrian force, there are some who regard this development as an attempt by Syria to probe the southern Lebanese security zone and to cause a provocation.

The Syrian force entered Suhmur to enforce order and demonstrate their authority after last weekend's killing of a local Druze, followed by the kidnapping of Shi'ite civilians and soldiers by members of the Druze community. The Shi'ites retaliated by kidnapping local Druze residents. This struggle was followed by an exchange of fire. A Syrian force stationed in the Rashayya al-Wadi area then moved south to bring about a cease-fire and to calm the area. [passage omitted]

Irish Defense Minister, Army Chief Arrive

NC161735 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1630 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] The Irish Defense Minister arrived in Beirut from Larnaca this afternoon. During his visit he will meet with a number of officials, and inspect his country's troops operating with UNIFIL in the South. He is accompanied by the Irish Army's chief of staff.

The Irish minister denounced Israeli aggressions against southern Lebanon.

Unidentified Gunmen Detain Egyptian Imam

NC171037 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1000 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] According to security souces, unidentified gunmen have detained Egyptian national Shaykh Muhammad Mahmud al-Jayyar, the imam of Al-Burghuliyah Township. He was returning to Al-Burghuliyah from Al-Ghaziyah on the Tyre road in a Mercedes 200, together with Qasim Muhammad al-Mahmud.

Junblatt Reaffirms National Movement's Program

NC161237 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1000 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Speech by PSP leader Walid Junblatt at a rally in Al-Mukhtarah on 16 March on the occasion of the 11th anniversary of the death of PSP founder Kamal Junblatt—read by announcer]

[Text] Today, the Lebanese national movement honors its founder and great martyr. He died for the sake of achieving the secular democratic Arab and national project in Lebanon, struggled for the consolidation of the Lebanese-Palestinian-Syrian alliance, and believed in the Arab people's unity of fate as the only way to ensure the freedom of decision-making by a nation being attacked by the Western and imperialist services in order to plunder its resources and arrest its freedom.

The Lebanese national movement renews its commitment today to the interim program for political reform as the sole, basic means for taking Lebanon out of the whirlpool of sectarian and confessional wars and the dangers of division or Zionist divisions. The movement reaffirms today that there can be no reconciliation, accord, or stability in Lebanon—or in the Arab region because Lebanon—with the Phalangists and the class-conscious Lebanese sectarian isolationists, which have been permanently linked for centuries to the interests of the West and its imperialist, crusader ideology. We say this so that no one will imagine that Washington's messages can achieve a just settlement in Lebanon.

The only aim of these messages is to ensure the survival of the Lebanese isolationists and to loosen the reins of the Army. This is an army which has not ceased fighting the nationalists in Lebanon since its establishment;

which has embraced and safeguarded the sectarian privileges; which has intentionally and openly assassinated the democrats, the poor, and the Arabs in Lebanon, including Ma'ruf Sa'd, Rashid Karami, the tobacco workers in the south, the Ghandur factory workers, and 23 April [not further identified]. This is an army which has attacked the southern suburb, Beirut, and the mountain, causing destruction and carrying out assassinations.

The Lebanese national movement today believes that the only path is through steadfastness; through the unity of word, faith, and deed; through upholding the rifle and fighting Israel and the Phalangists; and through a comprehensive civilian national administration having authority from the extreme south to the extreme north.

The Lebanese national movement also believes that an urgent practical, moral, and material embracement of the Arab revolutionaries in the Gaza Strip, West Bank, Golan Heights, and the Galilee, as well as the political embracement and defense of Khalil 'Abd al-Nasir, is the soundest way to liberate Palestine from the evils of Zionism and destroy the alliances of shame and humiliation worked out by the Western imperialist quarters against Arab Egypt.

With these brief words, the national movement renews its pledge and reaffirms its oath to its first leader, Kamal Junblatt.

Israeli Warplanes Raid Mountain Areas 17 Mar

NC170952 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0945 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] A short while ago security sources reported that a squadron of the enemy's planes is presently carrying out continuous air raids on the Baysur and Shimlan areas. Air traffic at Beirut Airport has ceased because of antiaircraft fire.

Residential Areas Strafed

NC171008 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1000 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Israeli warplanes strafed residential areas in 'Aynab in the mountain region at 1135 today. The enemy planes were confronted with intensive ground fire. According to initial information, three persons were injured, one seriously.

Fatah Military Posts Targeted

NC171052 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1022 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Excerpt] Israeli warplanes bombarded the Shimlan, Baysur, and Qabr Shmun areas today at 1140. The Israeli warplanes overflew the mountain, drawing ground fire from the Al-Shahhar area and Burj al-Barajinah camp. The target areas are known to house Fatah movement military posts.

Details on the raid indicate that six Israeli aircraft carried out the three-phased raid against military positions in Shimlan, Baysur, and Qabr Shmun. The warplanes used thermal balloons to draw any possible antiaircraft fire. During each phase of the raid, two warplanes attacked, while the remaining four planes provided protection for them. [passage omitted]

Raid Kills 1, Wounds 2

NC171239 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1225 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Excerpts] Israeli warplanes carried out an air raid this morning against Palestinian positions in Shimlan, Baysur, Qabr Shmun, and 'Aynab, using rockets and machineguns to strafe these areas. [passage omitted]

The PSP [Progressive Socialist Party] said that the raid was targeted against residential areas in 'Aynab, and that Hamzah Ahmad al-Shaykh was killed, and Bassam Qays and 'Abdallah Hamzah were wounded. [passage omitted]

Further on Deaths of 2 Palestinians in Tyre

PFLP Accuses Mosad of Killings

NC161900 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] The Amal Movement has declared that it arrested 15 Palestinians from the Al-Buss camp during its investigations into the assassinations of two Palestinians near the camp 2 days ago.

The Amal Movement earlier denounced the assassinations, saying that their goal was to drive a wedge between the Lebanese and the Palestinians.

In turn, the PFLP accused Mossad men who infiltrated Amal's security services of committing this crime, and called for the criminals to be punished

Strike Called in Camps

NC170658 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] The three Palestinian camps in Tyre—Al-Rashidiyah, Al-Buss, and Al-Burj al-Shamali—have begun a 3-day strike in protest over the assasination of the two PFLP members Mahmud Mustafa and his son Husam near Al-Buss camp.

The Palestinian organizations have issued a statement in Sidon calling on all the camps in Lebanon to observe a general strike. The statement notes that the crime has dealt a blow to the normalization of Lebanese-Palestinian relations. The statement also calls for the release of all the Palestinians held by the Amal Movement.

Amal Shells 'Enemy' Fortifications in South

NC162025 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 2000 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] A security source in the south said that in retaliation for the aggression by the occupation soldiers and their agents in the Lahd militias against the Iqlim al-Tuffah District, this afternoon Amal Movement artillery units shelled enemy fortifications. Violent clashes with the enemy's and agents' positions raged on all fronts in Iqlim al-Tuffah and east of Sidon . Mahmud 'Ali Hamzah, an Amal military officer on the combat lines, was martyred.

2 Phalangists Killed in East Beirut Car Chase

NC162015 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1630 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] A security source has reported that an armed pursuit took place at 1800 today on the Rayfun-Farayya-Yasu' al-Malik Road. The pursuit occurred between a red BMW 520 bearing the fake licence plate 92/90839, with two persons in it, and another orange colored BMW with an unidentified licence plate. After an exchange of fire, the two persons inside the first car were killed.

They are Joseph 'Aqiqi, head of the Phalangist party's Al-Sulimar barracks in the B'abda area, and his companion, who is believed to be Elie Germanos. Gunmen have appeared in large numbers in the area, where a strict security cordon has been imposed.

Reportage on 16 Mar SLA Military Clashes

Mashgharah, Jazzin Shelled

NC161850 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] The shelling of Mashgharah and Jazzin today began with violent clashes on the Buslayya-Jabal Safi axis between the South Lebanese Army (SLA) and the fundamentalists. An SLA position in Bra'shit came under artillery fire, and responded with artillery and rocket fire, followed by a search of the area.

SLA have militiamen defused two explosive devices on the Sfaray main road. According to the SLA, eight persons were killed in the shelling of Jba'.

AFP has cited Sidon hospital sources as saying that one civilian was killed and four others were wounded in an Israeli-SLA shelling of six villages in the south.

At 1645, the shelling increased, and many shells fell on Jazzin; artillery fire was also exchanged between Jabal Safi and Iqlim al-Tuffah. Three SLA militiamen were wounded.

Meanwhile, a Lebanese Army armored car was ambushed in the vicinity of Jabal Safi, and Master Sergeant Joseph Na'im 'Abdallah was wounded. Citizen Raymond Hanna Ruhayyim was also wounded while he was in a garden close to the operation.

Al-Nabi Taha Attacked

NC170657 Marj 'Uyun Lebanon Voice of Hope in Arabic 0600 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] A position in Al-Nabi Taha held by the South Lebanese Army [SLA] was hit by several rocket shells this morning. The soldiers manning the post returned fire. No casualties have been reported.

A number of rockets landed last night in the Marj 'Uyun district without causing any damage.

An SLA position in Jabal Safi was subjected to an armed attack yesterday. The garrison managed to repulse the assault, inflicting casualties on the attackers, who fled. The outskirts of Jazzin were also shelled from 'Ayn al-Tinah and Mashgharah in western Al-Biqa'. SLA artillery returned the fire.

Al-Shar' Makes Tour of Security Council Members

Confers With Raimond in Paris

JN161918 Damascus Television Service in Arabic 1730 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' met with French Foreign Minister Jean-Bernard Raimond in Paris yesterday evening. Husayn Hatim, Syrian ambassador in Paris, and Ahmad 'Isa, Syria's permanent representative at the Arab League in Tunis, attended the meeting. (Alain Gabet), chief of the Middle East and North African Department at the Foreign Ministry, attended on the French side.

During the talks the two delegations reviewed the Arab-Israeli conflict in light of the popular uprising in the occupied Arab territories, relations between Syria and France, and ways to develop them in all fields in the interests of the two countries. The talks were held in a cordial and constructive atmosphere.

Answering reporters' questions after the meeting, Al-Shar' said: The talks concentrated on the popular uprising in the occupied Arab territories and its importance in pressuring Israel and the United States to acept a just and comprehensive solution in the region by implementing the UN resolutions.

Al-Shar' added: The Syrian and French sides' viewpoints are identical on the need for Israel to withdraw from all occupied Arab territory, on guaranteeing the national inalienable rights of the Palestinian Arab people, and on convening a UN-sponsored international conference to be attended by the concerned parties, including the PLO and the five permanent members of the UN Security Council provided that the conference will be effective and have authority.

Answering a question on Syria's stand on the U.S. proposals, the foreign minister said that the U.S. proposals, as we received them, are unacceptable. Consequently, the desired proposals should meet two main conditions for the Arabs:

First, Israel's withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territory, and, second, the Palestinian Arab people's achievement of their complete rights.

The uprising, which has been continuing for months in the occupied Arab territories, the continuous expressions of the Syrians in the occupied Golan, the national Lebanese resistance, and its continuous acts since the Israeli invasion of Lebanon affirm that all Arabs under the yoke of Israeli occupation will not accept less than the complete liberation of their territory.

The foreign minister arrived in Paris to participate in the Arab ministerial committee authorized by the Arab League Council to hold contacts with the five permanent members of the UN Security Council to support the Arab uprising in the occupied Arab territory.

Remarks on Arab League Efforts

JN161901 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1720 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Faridah al-Shubashi dispatch from Paris]

[Text] Shultz' plan is rejected in part and parcel by the Arab side. This is what was announced by Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', who answered some of our questions.

[Begin recording] [Al-Shubashi] Mr Minister, regarding the Palestinians in the occupied territories and the daily suffering they have been undergoing for 4 months, what can they expect from the Arabs pending the convocation of an international conference when the diplomatic efforts bear fruit?

[Al-Shar'] For our part, we in Syria have extended and are extending every possible support for the popular uprising in the occupied Arab territories. We consider this uprising an important turning point in the history of not only the Palestine question but also the region.

We also believe that all the Arab states are dutybound to support this uprising to the best of their abilities because this uprising is causing real worry to Israel and the United States. Any attempt to extinguish or abort this uprising only serves Israel and the United States and will be absolutely rejected by us.

[Al-Shubashi] Is there a move within the Arab framework?

[Al-Shar'] There is a move within the Arab framework and there is a call for an extraordinary Arab summit. Syria endorsed that call as soon as it was made.

[Al-Shubashi] It has been reported there is an Arab unanimity to reject the Shultz plan. How does this conform with the fact that Egypt and Jordan have left the door open for this plan?

[Al-Shar'] When we talk about a unified Arab stand we mean the Arab countries affiliated to the Arab League.

[Al-Shubashi] But Jordan is an Arab League member.

[Al-Shar'] As we understood from Jordan, they agree to this unified Arab stand about which I have just spoken.

This stand calls for a real and effective international conference, a full and comprehensive withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories, and the recognition of the Palestinian people's legitimate rights.

[Al-Shubashi] What is the Arab alternative in view of the continuous U.S. rejection of this international conference in the manner desired by the Arabs?

[Al-Shar'] To continue the struggle and particularly the uprising as well as the Arab nation's continued faith in its ability to triumph no matter how long that takes.

In a historic speech last week on the 25th anniversary of the March revolution, the president clearly said:

Although we do not possess the military and technological capabilities Israel does at present, the day will come when we will be able to possess what Israel does. But the fact is that we possess obvious rights and a large population, which Israel will never be able to have.

[Al-Shubashi] Mr Minister, the Palestinians use stones as weapons in the occupied territories. Confrontation can thus even be with stones.

[Al-Shar'] As I have said, during my meeting with the French foreign minister I said that this uprising is of great significance. Its continuation has its dimensions. It indicates a new concept and a qualitative transformation in the course of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

It also emphasizes to the entire international community that we, the Arabs, are sure of our rejection of the Israeli occupation. But as for some Western states, particularly U.S. public opinion, this uprising has stressed beyond doubt that the Arabs under the Israeli occupation categorically and strongly reject the continuation of this Israeli occupation.

[Al-Shubashi] Is there any hope that the uprising will expedite conciliation between President al-Asad and Yasir 'Arafat?

[Al-Shar'] A dialogue has for some time been going on with the PLO's leadership. We are following up this dialogue.

But I would like to add in this regard that regardless of the fact whether this dialogue succeeds or fails—and naturally we hope it will succeed and that the brothers in the organization will return to the period when Syria's relations with the organization were strategic and strong—Syria did not and will not abandon any of the Palestinian Arab people's inalienable legitimate rights under any circumstances whatsoever.

[Al-Shubashi] Are you optimistic about the possibility of rapprochement between the PLO and President al-Asad?

[Al-Shar'] We believe the uprising must have cleansed some of the minds in which illusion, despair, or the spirit of bargaining has firmly settled. [end recording]

Says 'Uprising' 'Turning Point'

JN170726 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0415 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Paris—Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' has asserted that we in Syria have extended and continue to extend every asistance to the popular uprising in the occupied Arab territories.

We consider this uprising a prominent turning point in the Arab-Israeli conflict, he said. Al-Shar' added that the uprising has caused Israel and the United States real worry.

Replying to questions posed by a number of Arab and foreign journalists and news media reporters in Paris following the Arab ministerial committee's meeting with French Foreign Minister Jean-Bernard Raimond, Al-Shar' explained that the continuation of both the uprising and the Arab struggle will achieve victory no matter how long it may take.

The French side stressed France's adherence to the principle of the nonadmissibility of occupying others territory by force, the need for an Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories, and the Palestinian people's right to self-determination. It also stressed France's determination to continue its efforts to hold an international conference for peace in the Middle East.

Arrives in Moscow for Talks

JN170946 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0915 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' arrived in Moscow last night to participate in the activities of the Arab League Council's seven-member committee in support of the Arab citizens' uprising in the occupied territories.

He was received at the airport by Yuliy Vorontsov, first deputy minister of foreign affairs, heads of Arab diplomatic missions in Moscow, and Syrian Charge d'Affaires Ussef Jum'a and the embassy staff.

Condolences on Death of SRV Prime Minister

JN161118 Damascus Television Service in Arabic 1730 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Wahib Fadil, minister of presidential affairs, visited the SRV Embassy today and extended condolences on behalf of President Hafiz al-Asad to the Vietnamese ambassador and embassy staff on the death of Pham Hung, the late Vietnamese prime minister. He wrote in the condolence book. The Vietnamese ambassador accepted the condolences on the death of the SRV prime minister and thanked the president.

Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi also visited the Vietnamese Embassy at 1000 today to extend condolences on the death of Pham Hung, prime minister and Communist Party of Vietnam [CPV] Central Committee member. He was received at the embassy's entrance by the ambassador and the embassy's senior staff. The prime minister extended condolences in the name of the government on the death of Comrade Hung and wrote the following in the condolence book:

In the name of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, and in my name, I extend the most sincere, hearty condolences and warm comfort on the death of Comrade Pham Hung, prime minister and CPV Central Committee member, political personality, remarkable leader, and great struggler who performed outstanding services to Vietnam and contributed to its construction and development.

I am confident the relations of friendship and cooperation between Syria and Vietnam, to which the late comrade always contributed, will be strengthened continuously because this cooperation is based on joint principles of struggle, on supporting issues of liberation and freedom in the world, and on thwarting the schemes of international imperialism everywhere.

On his visit, the prime minister was accompanied by Yasin Rajjuh, minister of state for cabinet affairs; Dr Muhammad Harbah, minister of interior; Muhammad Salman, minister of information; Dr Muhammad Jum'a, minister of state; and Nasir Qaddur, minister of state for foreign affairs.

Commentary Examines Shamir's Washington Talks

JN151358 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: What has been revealed so far about enemy Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir's talks in Washington is that there has been no more than an exchange of cordial sentiments and an identity of strategic interests. There was also a U.S. announcement that the Shultz initiative is an integral whole and a Shamir announcement about his adherence to the occupied Arab territories and his total rejection of the whole idea of an international conference.

Also, there was an assertion by both the U.S. and Israeli sides that Washington is not exercising, and does not want to exercise, any pressure on Shamir to make him change his position on the Shultz initiative.

It only wants to persuade him to accept this initiative within the context of their strategic alliance, which forms the basis for every U.S. move in the Middle East.

The exercise of pressure on Israel is a matter which concerns the United States alone. But when Washington speaks about its intention to work for a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East, it must know that matters do not depend on wishes, but actions. It is not enough to talk about a comprehensvie settlement. Words must be backed by actions and by the bases which confirm comprehensiveness and also justice.

What has been presented by Washington so far are no more than old ideas in new garb. In other words, the interim settlement, which it is proposing through self-rule and direct negotiations within an ineffective international framework to chart the future of the Arab territories, does not set the bases for just and comprehensvie peace.

This means that the uproar over Shamir's talks with U.S. officials and their results will not deceive anyone, because these talks are, in the first place, being held outside the essential prerequisites for peace as specified in the UN resolutions, which frankly and clearly provide for the restoration of all the occupied Arab territories and the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian Arab people.

President Hafiz al-Asad has affirmed that the uprising of the people in the occupied territories is the true expression of their will and demands. These demands, which are ending the Israeli occupation of the Arab territories and recognizing the national rights of the Palestinian Arab people, are not subject to compromise or partial settlements regardless of the names given to such settlements.

Nobody can ignore or obliterate this fact, because it is a struggle law which has asserted itself; first, by the sweeping uprising against the odious Israeli occupation and its Nazi criminal tactics; and second, by the legality which has been established by the UN resolutions concerning the conflict in the region.

There is only one path of peace and its bases and prerequisites are the same. Its title has not changed and will not change. It is to regain all the occupied Arab territories and to recognize the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian Arab people.

TISHRIN Cited on Shultz Proposal Objective

JN151221 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0445 GMT 15 Mar 88

[From the press review]

[Text] Under the headline "The Partnership of Aggression," the newspaper TISHRIN says:

The distribution of political roles between United States and Israel can be clearly noticed in Shultz' peace proposals to the region. Although they are part of old and declared stands, these proposals constitute another kind

of political attachment toward Israel's aggressive approach to the Arabs, especially since they coincide with the occupation forces' acts of repression and torture in confronting the occupied land's uprising.

Although they implicate a different political move in the region, Shultz' proposals entail a hidden U.S. desire to distribute the weight of the uprising with Washington carrying part of it in order to free and extend Israel's arm at the appropriate time and under a suitable cover to overcome the current stage.

TISHRIN adds: The two sides agree on one immediate objective in Shultz' proposals: to besiege the uprising and abort it together through repressive and political means. At the same time, they are eager to reproduce Camp David with a new color and shape and to continue joint action in this direction with the aim of finding an appropriate axis around which Camp David may revolve.

This appeared clearly in Washington's ideas and Tel Aviv's exaggerated reactions to them. This objective aims at being exploited as a means to besiege the uprising and market the Camp David plans.

Washington announces its support for Israel in everything it needs, approves Israel's repressive measures in confronting the uprising, and prevents the development of international efforts aimed at halting the practice of repression and terrorism against the occupied Arab land's citizens.

Washington also prevents the pavement of the required background for the convening of an international peace conference to tackle the regional situation.

Israel does not want peace, cannot exist with it, and is not willing to see it near or far. Israel and peace are opposites and cannot meet on one track. Therefore, Israel terms agression as security, expansion as right, killing and terrorism as policy, and the Arabs' surrender as a just peace.

On this basis, the homeland's uprising began, escalated, continues, and has forced the Zionist entity's leaders to request U.S. assistance in light of the kinfolk's strong militant will.

Concluding its comments, TISHRIN says: In his pan-Arab speech on the 25th anniversary of the 8 March revolution, the leader of Arab struggle, President Haifz al-Asad, summarized the will of the Arab masses struggling in the arena of Arab-Zionist conflict inside and outside the occupied homeland.

He affirmed that the war will continue and that the future is ours. The kinfolk in the occupied homeland daily affirm their determination to translate the will of struggle and the will of struggler Al-Asad and his masses.

Afghanistan

Italian Photojournalist Sentenced for 'Spying'

LD162220 Rome Domestic Service in Italian 2130 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Fausto Biloslavo, an Italian photojournalist, has been sentenced in Kabul to 7 years imprisonment. He has been charged with spying for a foreign power. Biloslavo, who works for an audiovisual agency, (Albatross) based in Trieste, was arrested in an eastern province in Afghanistan, after having crossed the Pakistan frontier with a group of antigovernment mujahidin, according to what has been reported by the Soviet news agency, TASS. According to the charge, Biloslavo filmed government and Soviet troop movements so that he could later sell the films to the U.S. secret Service.

Nur Leaves for Poland Ambassadorial Assignment

LD161811 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Nur Ahmad Nur, Politburo member and PDPA Central Committee secretary, ambassador and extraordinary representatve of Afghanistan to Poland, left today for Warsaw to take up his position. At Kabul airport he was seen off by Saleh Muhammad Ziray, Politburo member and PDPA Central Committee secretary; a number of high ranking officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and Edward Poradko, ambassador and extraordinary representative of the People's Republic of Poland in Kabul.

Kabul Mujahidin Commander Views Peace Process

PM150820 Paris LE MONDE in French 12 Mar 88 p 6

[Interview with Kabul mujahidin commander Abdul Haq by Geoffroy Linyer in Paris—date not given]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] Abdul Haq is an open, affable man whose political stances are surprisingly moderate. Speaking excellent English, which he learned from contact with foreign journalists while fighting in the resistance, he expressed the thinking of a broad section of the internal commanders.

"These commanders," he said, "have already been sacrificed by the war and are likely to be sacrificed by peace this time." The resistance's military leaders are not represented in the negotiations and the transitional government plan put forward by the alliance [Islamic Alliance of Resistance Parties] does not give them any specific role. This plan, drawn up by the parties in Peshawar, gives a crucial place to the political leaders. However, many mujahidin and commanders find it difficult to identify with those parties, whose "excessive bureaucracy" is condemned by Abdul Haq.

This situation will probably be particularly difficult to accept because many of the commanders have proved their worth as administrators, by administrating the civilian populations in the regions which they control. "I am not talking for my own benefit," he hastily added, "I have no political aspirations." Abdul Haq does not regard this as a major problem. The issue will be the subject of a compromise between the political and military officials who need each other.

However, he was very shocked by the commentaries in the Western press portraying a liberated Afghanistan as a prey to civil war. "Once again the Afghanistan experts are seriously mistaken. At the beginning of the war, nobody imagined that we would last more than 6 months. Today we are believed to be incapable of agreeing among ourselves. Why? Simply because we respect all the political factions which make up the resistance. Everyone, including the Shi'ites and those communists who have not committed any crimes, must be involved in the government."

In this connection, he deplored the U.S. attitude. "Reagan is in the final year of his term of office. He is prepared to make all kinds of concessions to secure the Soviets' departure, without worrying about the country's fate." Abdul Haq spoke in a very calm, almost neutral voice. It was only on the question of Muslim fundamentalism that he raised his voice. "The accusations of fundamentalism in Afghanistan are unfounded. We are fighting for our freedom, our land, our culture, and also for our religion. Do they want us to become Christians to please the European governments who have done nothing for us for 8 years?"

With regard to future relations between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union, Abdul Haq is showing great realism. Afghanistan should develop good-neighborly relations with the USSR, "provided the withdrawal goes smoothly; provided the Soviets do not cause damage and do not leave mines behind them." He wants a nonaligned, but not a neutral Afghanistan, and this is the alliance's official position. "But," he added, "this is all still hypothetical. For the time being, the Gorbachev effect in Afghanistan has meant as many bombings and more attacks than before. And I have not seen any sign of a forthcoming withdrawal."

He is, therefore, not crying victory. "Our only victory is that we have prevented the collapse of the resistance. But our country has been laid to waste. Peace will be even more difficult to win than the war. The Soviet Union, however, will emerge from this war stronger. Its armed forces have made considerable progress in the human sphere and the sphere of equipment in Afghanistan over the past 8 years. We internal commanders will not give up until the last Soviet soldier has left Afghan soil."

Moscow City Mayor, Delegation Arrive 15 Mar

LD150741 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0506 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Text] Kabul, March 14, BAKHTAR—The delegation of the executive committee of people's deputies of Moscow

City headed by V.T. Saykin, mayor of Moscow City, arrived here today. The delegation met with Daud Razmyar, secretary of the party committee of Kabul City here today. Razmyar briefed the Soviet side on the existing problems and requirements of Kabul, specially on matters such as canalization, water supply, construction of residential houses, education, health and city transportation.

The delegation promised the Afghan side the Soviet all-sided readiness in the areas of bilateral cooperations between Moscow and Kabul. Later, the Soviet delegation met with Adina Sangin, mayor of Kabul during the day. The Soviet delegation visited Kabul housing factory, Kabul workers township and steam house of third micro-rayon. The delegation after planting of "friendship tree" in the compound of housing factory presented the gift of Moscow City to the president of that factory.

Meets Najibullah, Keshtmand

LD160922 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0503 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] [Placename indistinct] March 15, BAKHTAR—Najibullah, president of the Republic of Afghanistan, received the delegation of the Executive Committee of the Council of People's Representatives of Moscow City headed by V.T. Saykin, the mayor of Moscow City. The delegation at the meeting promised to expand Moscow's cooperation in tackling the problems and the objective needs of Kabul City.

Similarly, Prime Minister Sultan 'Ali Keshtmand, had a meeting with the delegation. Views were exchanged about the development of Kabul City and the subsequent expansion of direct cooperation between Kabul and Moscow cities.

The guest delegation also took part in a reception hosted by the Council of Ministers in honour of the delegation.

Speeches were exchanged between Prime Minister Sultan 'Ali Keshtmand and V.T. Saykin at the reception.

Army Units Commended for Defense Role

LD121934 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 12 Mar 88

[Text] On the basis of a decision by the Supreme Command of the Republic of Afghanistan, a number of units of the Afghan Army were honored with the title, Guard Units of the Republic of Afghanistan, for their invaluable participation in the defense of the homeland and in ensuring peace and tranquility in the country.

According to the BAKHTAR military section, meetings were held on this occasion at the 37th Brigade of the Assault Landing Force of the Hero Unit of the Republic of Afghanistan, at the Pole-e Charkhi Armored Brigade, at the Qarghah'i forces, and at the strike unit of Kabul garrison. They were attended by Major General Muhammad Rafi', defense minister; Major General Shanawa Tani, chief of the General Staff of the Afghan Armed forces; Major General Muhammad Nabi Azimi, first deputy defense minister; and Brigadier General Zabihullah Ziarmal, chief of the army political affairs, respectively.

They read the decisions of the Supreme Command of the Republic of Afghanistan on the awards of guard titles to the units. In separate speeches, they drew the attention of the participants in the ceremonies to their duties, responsibilities, and commitments to the defense of the homeland and of the gains of the April Revolution. A number of personnel of these units then delivered speeches, pledging to work to defend the independence and territorial integrity of the country, to implement the national reconciliation policy, and to ensure peace and tranquility so that they would preserve the title, Guard Units of the Republic of Afghanistan, by carrying out their duties under the present conditions.

During these ceremonies, commendation letters and gifts were presented to a number of personnel of these units.

Mujahidin Ambush Convoy Along Salang Highway

LD171358 Tehran IRNA in English 1305 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Islamabad, March 17, IRNA—Afghan mujahidin attacked a supply convoy of the occupying forces along Salang highway, Baghlan Province on March 8. The convoy comprising of 120 vehicles including tanks and trucks incurred substanial losses in the attack.

Bangladesh

Opposition Launches New Anti-Ershad Drive

BK161600 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] In Bangladesh, demonstrations were held by the main opposition parties throughout the country as part of their fresh anti-Ershad movement.

In Dhaka, leaders of three opposition alliances condemned the government's repressive measures.

They alleged that over 6,000 political leaders and activists are languishing in jails without any trial. They demanded their immediate release.

Awami League's Kamal Hussain Taken Off Flight

BK161222 Dhaka SANGBAD in Bengali 9 Mar 88 pp 1, 8

[Text] Dr Kamal Hussain, a Presidium member of the Awami League, was stopped from going to Sydney, Australia.

Yesterday he boarded a Thai International aircraft (TG 322) after the usual immigration and customs check at 1400 and when the plane was about to take off, it was stopped by the immigration authorities at Zia International Airport.

When he came out of the plane, the authorities told him: "You do not have permission to go abroad." An official of the Immigration Department then took away Dr Kamal Hussain's passport and returned it after stamping it "Off-Loaded, Ordered by the Special Branch of Police."

Later, Dr Kamal Hussain was brought to the VIP lounge, and he left the airport almost immediately.

Dr Kamal Hussain gave the details of the incident to newsmen at the National Press Club yesterday. He said that he was going to Sydney to attend an international seminar related to law as a representative of Bangladesh. However, he was taken off the aircraft by the immigration authorities.

It was learned from Home Ministry sources that there was no ban on Dr Kamal Hussain's visit to foreign countries. It said that yesterday's incident preventing Dr Kamal Hussain from going to Sydney by the immigration authorities of the Zia International Airport is being investigated.

BSS adds: Meanwhile, an official source said that it was never the intention of the government to stop Dr Kamal Hussain from going abroad and it has already initiated action against those responsible for causing this unhappy incident.

Blames Government for Incident

BK161537 Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 11 Mar 88 p 1

[Text] Dr. Kamal Hussain, Presidium member, Bangladesh Awami League, left Dhaka on Thursday for Sydney to attend a seminar on law concerning energy, reports BSS.

In a statement issued before his departure, Dr. Hussain put the blame on the Government for his off-loading from an international flight on March 8.

Referring to the Government version on the incident, he wondered how such a "drastic action" could be taken without Government's order. This according to him, "confirms that today there is no rule of law in the country."

He said attempts had been made to thrust the blame on some subordinate officers and make "scapegoats" of them.

Dr. Hussain thanked the Supreme Court Bar Association and public leaders and friends who have expressed concern at the March 8 incident as "as expression of their solidarity in the united people's movement to restore democracy and the rule of law".

India

Delhi Reports Launching of First Satellite

BK170925 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0850 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] India's first operational remote sensing satellite, IRS-1A, hurtled into orbit seconds after its launch from the Baykonur Cosmodrome in the Soviet Union shortly after 1230 Indian Standard Time. The Indian ambassador in the Soviet Union, Mr T.N. Kaul, and Gnavcosmos Chairman Mr Aleksandr Dunayev were among those present at the launching ceremony. The 980-kg satellite is expected to take its scheduled slot in space in about a month's time. The satellite is to go through several sensitive postlaunch maneuvers before being placed in the polar synchronous orbit.

Today's launching marks India's firm strides in the space technology as it joins the United States, the Soviet Union, Japan, and France, which have orbit satellites of this weight class. The launching also highlights the satellite design and development capabilities built by ISRO [India Space Research Organization] since the launching of the country's first satellite Aryabhata in April 1975.

The payload system aboard IRS-1A constitutes sophisticated cameras to collect data, which will be of immense use in agriculture, forestry, and environmental technology.

'Constant Vigil' on Pakistani Nuclear Issue

BK170945 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] India has made it clear to Pakistan that its relentless pursuit of acquiring nuclear-weapon capability will completely change the security environment in the region and force India to review her option. This was stated by the minister of state for external affairs, Mr Natwar Singh, in the Rajya Sabha today.

Replying to a short-notice question, the minister said that India is maintaining a constant vigil on this as well as other developments having a bearing on the country's security. The short-notice question was raised by Mr Kapil Verma, Congress-I, who drew the government's attention to a recent report in THE NEW YORK TIMES that Pakistan has acquired the ability to make sophisticated and smaller nuclear bombs, which can be carried on F-16 and Mirage planes.

The minister said the government is aware of Pakistan's single-minded drive to acquire a nuclear weapons capability. India's apprehensions regarding the nonpeaceful dimensions of Pakistan's nuclear program have been brought to the notice of all concerned.

Replying to the supplementaries during question time, the defense minister, Mr K.C. Pant, informed the members that Islamabad is raising new formations with the return of its troops from Saudi Arabia. The minister assured the members that all these developments are taken full care of and our defense planning is directed to ensure that Pakistan does not get an edge over India. He said whenever Pakistan has attacked the Siachen area, our Armed Forces have repulsed very effectively.

Gandhi, Sri Lankan Delegation Hold Talks

BK161611 Delhi Domestic Service in English
1530 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] The prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, has reiterated India's firm commitment to implement the India-Sri Lanka agreement in all its facets to restore normalcy in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. His assurance to give a further momentum to the implementation of the agreement and to restoring the democratic process came when the Sri Lankan minister for land development, Mr Gamini Dissanayake, met Mr Rajiv Gandhi in New Delhi today. They discussed the general political situation in Sri Lanka, extremist activities, and holding of elections in four provinces, and also stressed the need for continuing active cooperation between the two governments.

Mr Gandhi spoke about the operations of the IPKF to disarm the LTTE and about the return of refugees of all communities to their homes in Sri Lanka. Mr Dissanayake reiterated Sri Lanka's commitment to implement the India-Sri Lanka agreement.

Earlier, Mr Dissanayake had separate meetings with the minister of state for external affairs, Mr Natwar Singh, and the defense minister, Mr K.C. Pant.

Further on Visit of Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew

Holds Talks With Gandhi

BK161624 Delhi Domestic Service in English
1530 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] The prime minister of Singapore, Mr Lee Kuan Yew, had an hour-long talk with the prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, in New Delhi today. Briefing newsmen, an official spokesman said that the two leaders had an exchange of views on problems which the democracies face in the process of economic development. They were later joined by delegations of the two countries and had wide-ranging discussions on several issues including bilateral relations.

Both the sides noted that they shared common commitment to the democratic and secular values. The two delegations also exchanged views on Kampuchea and Afghanistan. India's relations with Pakistan also figured during the talks. There was an exchange of view on the role of regional cooperation wn strengthening peace and stability and the role played by SAARC and ASEAN to achieve it.

On Sri Lanka, the visiting dignitary was briefed on the present developments.

The minister of state for external affairs, Mr Natwar Singh, who was a member of the Indian delegation, referred to the recent talks between Prince Sihanouk and Mr Hun Sen and said that in India's assessment the people of both Vietnam and Kampuchea are for a peaceful settlement.

The Indian delegation also included the finance and commerce minister, Mr N.D. Tiwari; the minister of state for home affairs, Mr Chidambaram; and the Indian high commissioner in Singapore, Mr Shankar Nair.

The Singapore delegation included three senior ministers besides their high commissioner.

Earlier, the Singapore prime minister called on the president, Mr R. Venkataraman, and the vice president, Dr Shankar Dayal Sharma.

Gandhi Hosts Banquet

BK170705 Delhi Domestic Service in English
240 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] The prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, has said enduring development can only take place if there is peace in the world and peace in each region. Speaking at a banquet hosted by him in honor of the Singapore prime minister, Mr Lee Kuan Yew, in New Delhi last night, he said the greatest danger to peace arises from the pursuit of doctrines of deterrence. In this nuclear age, such doctrines only endanger peace and threaten the very survival of human beings. He said the INF treaty between the superpowers will become truly historic only if it leads toward a total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Referring to Kampuchea, Mr Rajiv Gandhi said the recent dialogue between the Kampuchean prime minister, Mr Hun Sen, and Prince Sihanouk has opened the prospects of breaking deadlock on the issue.

On Afghanistan, the prime minister said it is essential to focus on the withdrawal of Soviet troops and ending foreign interference. About Sri Lanka, Mr Gandhi said the agreement signed last July with President Jayewardene provides just and durable solution to the problems of Tamils in Sri Lanka. It has also strengthened the unity of the country and reinforced the security of the region.

Mr Lee, in his reply, said the two associations—SAARC and ASEAN—could play a vital role in promoting peace, harmony, and understanding in the region. He said the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement offers the best hope that Sri Lanka could survive as a unitary state and retain communal peace and harmony.

Iran

Khomeyni Message to IRGC Head on 'Victory'

LD171122 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
1030 GMT 17 Mar 88

[From the news headlines]

[Text] Imam Khomeyni, the commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces, in a message which he sent in reply to the message of congratulations sent by Mr Mohsen Rezai'e, the IRGC commander, referred to the blessings of God Almighty and His noble messenger in the great and lightning victory of the fighters of Islam in the "Val-Fajr-10" operations: Most certainly, this divine gift presented to us at the end of this eventful year is the realization of the promise: If you assist God, He will assist you and will make your steps firm. [Koranic verse] It is the result of the peerless steadfastness of this great nation against the dastardly attacks of the 'Aflaqis in bombing the cities.

The imam of the ummah graciously added: These reports of victory and the epic deeds of the heroic fighters of Islam not only brought joy to the hearts of our nation, but to the hearts of all oppressed and deprived people. They have placed Saddam, the 'Aflaqis, and their supporters and masters, particularly the United States and Israel, in a state of mourning.

In this mesage, Imam Khomeyni said: Convey my sincere greetings to all the dear and brave commanders and to the victorious fighters from the IRGC, the mobilization forces, the Armed Forces, the airborne division, the Air Force, the brave unknown strugglers, the helpers, and all the popular forces. Please also convey the greetings and thanks of the Iranian nation to the inhabitants of the liberated Iraqi cities who, without even a shot being fired at them or their cities, welcomed the fighters of Islam with open arms and the shouts of "God is great!"

The commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces, reiterating his thanks to the steadfast Iranian nation and the beloved fighters, emphasized: I ask the zealous youth of the proud, Islamic country of Iran to go to the battlefronts and, with the continution of their operations, prevent the defeated and desperate 'Aflaqis from reorganizing their forces.

Khomeyni Receives Families of Martyrs

LD161237 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
1030 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Excerpt] On the anniversary of the Mab'ath [the day Mohammad received his prophetic mission] of the prophet of Islam, the families of martyrs, those missing in action, POW's, and the self-sacrificing ones [janbazan] from Esfahan, Qom, Tehran, and Sari met with the imam of the ummah this morning in the Jamaran mosque.

In this meeting a choir from Abadeh sang two songs for the imam of the ummah. Then Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Karrubi, the representative of the imam to the Hajj and Pilgramage Organization and the deputy speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly, spoke and expressed his congratulations to the imam of the ummah on the anniversary of the Mab'ath of the prophet of Islam and glorious victory of the fighters of Islam. He also praised the resistance and self-sacrifice of Muslim Palestinian fighters against Zionism and world arrogance.

In this meeting, while expressing his appreciation to the families of the martyrs, POW's, and those missing in action, and referring to the unprecedented steadfastness of the people in the face of the aerial attacks by the Ba'thist enemy, Mr Karrubi conveyed the thanks, appreciation, congratulations, and condolences of the imam of the ummah to them. At the end of this meeting, the imam of the ummah responded to the sentiments of those present. [passage omitted]

Majlis Speaker's Message to Troops on Fronts

LD171311 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
1030 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] On the occasion of the recent victories of the fighters of Islam on the battlefronts, the following message was released by Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani, the representative of the imam on the Supreme Defense Council:

In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Greetings to the victorious fighters and those who are waging holy war in the path of truth, of God and Islam! Blessed be your brilliant, blasphemy-crushing victory! God's special greetings and blessings be upon you, God-seeking fighters, who hold in your hands the edicts of the planet of history and who have brought confusion and bewilderment to those laying claim to political leadership of the world. You drag them behind you and whenever the satans of world arrogance plan to impose their evil will, you smash their conspiracies with a single movement and shred them into pieces. Your latest and most crushing step was your blessed "Val-Fajr-10" operation, which turned the hopes of the leaders of world blasphemy in the outcome of their new missile attacks on weakening your determination into despair. Instead of

diverting your attention from the battlefronts to behind the lines, these missile attacks directed the forces of those behind the lines toward the front lines.

Under these critical and destiny-making conditions, I draw the attention of you beloved ones to the following points:

1. As ever, you should be aware of the fact that these victories are due to the blessings and the will of the compassionate and just Lord of the world, who returned to the satans of the East, the West, Zionism, and reaction their utmost deceits and plots. Your must be proud that, through your patience, steadfastness, and self-sacrifice, you have become instruments for implementing the will of the Lord of the world. The only way to repay these blessings is to continue your patience and steadfastness.

2. For the first time, tens of thousands of Iraqi civilians in the region have come under your control. We expect that the fine manifestations of your Islamic and humane behavior and your kindness and mercy will provide examples for future victors of the world. You know that the wronged Iraqi people, particularly the oppressed Kurdish Muslims, have been crushed under the oppression of tyrannical 'Aflaqis; they deserve kindness and sympathy. You should not regard them as partners in the crimes of the tyrannical Ba'thists. To those who wish to go and live in Iraq, give them permission to do so. As for those who wish to live under the banner of the Islamic Republic of Iran, kindly hand them over to the centers for Muslims and refugees. If they also wish to remain in their own area, defend them against the dastardly attacks of the Ba'thist forces.

3. You must chase the fleeing enemy and not to allow them to catch their breath or provide them with another opportunity for atrocities. The illustrious leader and the esteemed commander in chief of the Armed Forces and the self-sacrificing and steadfast people are demanding the continuation of the holy war and the relentless pursuit of the retreating Ba'thists. Your new year festivities and celebrations will be in the battlefronts, and the attention of the nation and the eyes of all sincere Muslims throughout the world are fixed upon the frontlines in the Al-Faw, Shalamcheh, the Majnun Islands, Khur, Mehran, Naft-e Shah, (Zur), Mawat, and Hajj 'Umran operational zones, and other critical areas. The enemies of Islam are hoping to divert your attention to behind the lines. However, Islam and Muslims expect you to continue pushing forward and to chase the feeble enemy.

Forward! May God's hand be with you, and may the effective prayers of the imam of the ummah accompany you on your path!

[Signed] 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, the imam's representative on the Supreme Defense Council

Montazeri Notes Missile Strikes in Address

LD171240 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] On the occasion of the day the Prophet Mohammad, may God's peace and benediction be upon him, received his mission [Be'that], various strata of the population, including employees of the telecommunications service, the mobilization forces of the Shahid Beheshti Base in Tehran, and a group of teachers from Meybod and Yazd and from the Zanjan Education and Training Department, as well as the minister of mines and metals and a number of that ministry's employees, met yesterday with Grand Ayatollah Montazeri. [At this point, the voice of a second announcer is heard superimposed over that of the first giving the following warning: "Attention, Attention! The signal you are hearing now is a warning of danger, or a Red Alert, which means there will be an air raid. Please leave your present location and go to the shelters." The sound of an air raid siren continues in the background of the item for approximately 3 minutes.]

In this meeting, the deputy leader congratulated all the world's Muslims on the occasion of the great feast of the mission of the Prophet of Islam. He added that if all the blessings and accomplishments, including science, politics, wealth, lordship, and other [words indistinct] status, lack piety and human qualities, this will result in the (?deterioration and decline) of mankind and society. These missiles and bombs which today are being poured down over the heads of our people by Saddam have been built by science and are being fired by science. However, to use science without piety, commitment, or human compassion—or, for instance, the policy by which the East and the West have adopted and divided the world between them and prepare everything in such a way as to serve only their own interests and their hegemony—is satanic. The policy we want, however, and which is a part of religion and what the immaculate imams possessed, is the policy of mercy, which is fundamental to humanitarian principles, divine values, and piety, and seeks to worship God rather than to worship and serve oneself.

Grand Ayatollah Montazeri, pointing to the struggles of the Muslim people of Palestine, stressed: Today the Muslim people of Palestine have found their path and are relying on Islam. They have islamicized their uprising to the point that Mubarak senses danger for the Arabs because the Palestinian nation has turned to Islamic fundamentalism.

Under such circumstances, it is our duty to serve this Islamic uprising in any way we can, by organizing meetings, conferences, and marches, and by donating financial and moral assistances so that, God willing, they may be victorious and that dear Jerusalem may be freed from the evil of Israel.

Diplomat in Bern on 'Changes' in War Policy

LD171400 Kuwait KUNA in English 1623 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Zurich, March 16 (KUNA)—A senior Iranian diplomat has said that Iran has now stopped all contacts with the United Nations Security Council over Resolution 598, and that it no longer felt bound by international conventions, including the Geneva Conventions. Charge d'Affaires Seyyed Mohammad Hoseyn Malek, in an interview with the respected Zurich newspaper NEUE ZUERCHER ZEITUNG published Wednesday, also said that Tehran now also ruled out any political settlement to the Gulf conflict, and felt that it could only be ended by military means.

The Bern-based diplomat told the paper that Tehran had decided on this "important change" in policy because it believed Iraqi missile attacks were part of Security Council-backed efforts to force Iran into accepting Resolution 598. The resolution calls for an immediate ceasefire, an exchange of prisoners and a return to national boundaries by the forces of both belligerents.

The Iranian diplomat told the paper he had been instructed by the Foreign Ministry in Tehran to make the announcement of the change in policy. The Iranian diplomatic mission in Geneva had no immediate comment Wednesday afternoon on the reported statements of the charge d'affaires. (In Rome, the new Iranian ambassador to Italy Hamid Abu Talebi Wednesday echoed the same stance in a pre-prepared statement.)

Security Council Issues 'Statement' on War

LD171217 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] According to the Central News Unit, the president of the Security Council read a statement in a short session of the council's 15 members in which he asked the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iraq to stop operations against each other, as well as the war of the cities. The Council's president also said: The Security Council regrets the intensification of hostilities between the two countries and supports the efforts of Javier Perez de Cuellar to establish contacts with the two countries in order to find a solution to end the war.

This statement was released following the decision by the Soviet Union to withdraw its previous invitation to issue a resolution calling for an end to the war of the cities. Meanwhile the Security Council, ignoring its duty and under pressure from Western countries, continues to remain indifferent to Iraq's crimes in attacking residential and civilian regions and refuses to issue a resolution condemning these attacks. It has confined itself to releasing a statement in general terms on the war by the president of the council.

World Groups Urged To Take Steps Against Iraq

NC151010 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0330 GMT 15 Mar 88

[Central News Unit research group commentary: "The Operations by the Combatants of Islam and the Agitation of the Baghdad Rulers"]

[Excerpts] Following the victorious commencement of the "Zafar-7" operations in the western part of the country, once again, the Ba'thist-Zionist Iraqi regime began to attack our civilian and residential areas. The Iraqi regime has resumed its new round of mischief, based on fabricated pretexts, at a time when the fighters of Islam intend to respond answer decisively to that regime's crimes. Throughout the imposed war, we have witnessed that the Islamic Republic's military activities on the fronts have always coincided with the Baghdad regime's attacks on residential areas. So far, the resistant and heroic Iranian nation has passed through three phases of the war of cities. [passage omitted]

Such acts fail to display military superiority but instead, reveal the Baghdad rulers' agitation. They also display the Iraqi regime's great weakness on the battlefields. The Ba'thist regime's failure to observe international norms and their repeated violations of these norms have shown on several occasions that it is helpless; hence it resorts to such crimes.

Meanwhile, in view of the Iraqi regime's savagery, international forums and world organizations should take suitable steps to stop the Baghdad rulers from perpetrating these crimes. Under the present circumstances, the silence and inactivity of these organizations encourages the aggressor and results in the loss of credibility of such organizations. The United Nations and particularly the Security Council have not reacted suitably to the Soviet proposal. In addition to displaying this council's absence of goodwill in finding a just end to the war, this attitude results in further destruction of homes and in more deaths of innocent people.

Meanwhile, the coordinated activities of the United States and Great Britain to conceal the crimes being perpetrated by the Iraqi regime, in a bid to keep the draft resolution on an arms embargo on the Islamic Republic of Iran in the forefront, is a manifestation of these regimes' direct collaboration with the Ba'thist aggressors. These activities will not remain hidden from the regional countries. At any rate, the American and British regimes should remember that the fire sparked by Saddam will affect their own interests too. The heroic nation once again considers the silence and inactivity of international organizations and of governments advocating human rights as yet another proof that Iran is being oppressed. This makes us more determined to give a suitable answer on the battlefronts.

The Baghdad rulers' insanity and their beastliness in attacking civilian and residential areas has once again clearly shown the need to set up proper shelters. The Hizballah ummah and the respectable officials should accelerate their activities in this field because of the possibility of increased mischief by the enemy. We once again state that we will undoubtedly answer the enemy's crimes on the fronts and that the fighters of Islam have already started their punitive operations in the form of the "Bayt ol-Moqaddas-3" operations. Also, we declare to the international organizations and to Saddam's mentors that we will not beg for our rights. We will crush the aggressor with our fist of faith and we will crush the sedition by depending on God Almighty and on the fire of the weapons of the fighters of Islam.

Iraqis Adopting 'Scorched Earth' Policy

LD161817 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Realizing the definite nature of the defeat of its forces in the "Val-Farj-10" operational zone, the Zionist regime of Iraq has adopted a scorched earth policy and targeted residential areas and economic establishments of the region's towns and villages, particularly Halabjah and the liberated town of Khurmal. Announcing this news, the WIH supervisor stated: The Iraqi regime had also on another occasion resorted to this type of crime when it demolished the town of Panjwin by explosives and heavy bombing in September-October 1983 during the successful "Val-Fajr-4" operation.

He said: While the advance of the fighters of Islam continues with full success in the "Val-Fajr-10" operational zone and while the Muslim Iraqi people in the towns and villages of this region are counting the minutes waiting for the arrival of the fighters of Islam, the Iraqi regime has subjected the Muslim people of these regions to its heavy aerial bombing.

He said: Repetition of this crime shows that in when facing defeat, the Iraqi regime has no mercy, even on its own people. The Muslim people in the Iraqi villages and towns in the western region of Berkah and Darbandikhan are now being slaughtered by repeated bombings by Iraqi aircraft. He added: The fighters of Islam are now making every effort, with all their power, to counter the barbaric bombings of the residential areas in the operational zone.

The WIH headquarters supervisor asked the organizations that claim to defend human rights to act swiftly to prevent the slaughter of the people of Iraq by the regime ruling that country.

In conclusion, he said: The fighters of Islam will undoubtedly reply to the crimes of the enemy. The rulers of Baghdad must realize they cannot halt the advance and victories of the fighters of Islam on the frontlines by relying on (?attacking civilians).

Missile Attacks, Ground Operations Continue

Iraqi Warplanes Downed in West

LD161515 Tehran IRNA in English 1506 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 16, IRNA—AN Iraqi warplane attempting to bomb residential areas in western Iran was shot down by Iran's anti-aircraft fire at 12:20 hours local time (08:50 GMT) Wednesday. There was no immediate report on the fate of the pilot and search for finding him and the plane's wreckage was underway.

Communique No 3,143

LD161618 Tehran IRNA in English 1558 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 16, IRNA—Iranian jet fighters flew 19 sorties from 06:40 to 13:30 hours local time (03:10 to 10:00 GMT) Wednesday, heavily bombing eco-military centers of Iraqi cities of Irbil and Kirkuk as well as enemy positions and troop concentration sites in Faqqeh, Al-'Amarah, Khurmal and Sidasadeq [placename as received].

Announcing the above here today, the 3143d Joint Staff Communique said the fighters returned safely to bases after inflicting substantial losses in men and equipment on enemy troops. Iranian long-range artillery continued pounding military and economic centers of Basra, 'Ali al-Gharb, 'Ali al-Sharqi, Khanaqin, Naft Khaneh, Banmil and Al-Sulaymaniyah until 09:00 hours (05:30 GMT) Wednesday. Scores of civilians were martyred and wounded in Wednesday's Iraqi missile and air attacks on Tehran, Bakhtaran, Orumiyeh, Shiraz, Salmas, Daran, Chadegan and Esfahan.

In the Strait of Hormuz, Iran's naval gunboats intercepted and searched five cargo ships and oil tankers Tuesday but allowed them to continue voyage after being satisfied they were not carrying cargo for Iraq. The Islamic Republic Air Force effectively carried out reconnaissance flights over the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman yesterday in support of the navy.

Exchange of artillery and mortar fire continued throughout the fronts yesterday raging somewhat more heavily in Chazabeh, southern sector, where Iraqi forces sustained several casualties and losses. Iranian artillery fire suppressed three Iraqi patrol convoys in Panjwin and Cheqa Hammam, northwestern fronts and checked enemy engineering operations in Nahr 'Anbar Tuesday, concluded the communique.

500 Iraqi Casualties; 310 POW's

LD161634 Tehran IRNA in English 1625 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Operational Region, March 16, IRNA—Another 500 Iraqi soldiers were killed or wounded and 310 more captured in heavy battles with Iran's Muslim combatants

in areas between the liberated Iraqi town of Khurmal and strategic Sidasadeq [name as received]-Halabjah road in northeastern Iraq Wednesday afternoon.

This brings to 800 the number of Iraqi POWS evacuated behind the war zone since the start of the first phase of the "Val-Fajr-10" operations Tuesday night. Following the liberation of Khurmal and its surrounding villages today, Iran's Muslim combatants attacked the remainders of Iraqi troops southwest of the town this afternoon. Meanwhile, Radio Tehran interrupted its routine programs for a second time today at 19:00 local time (15:30 GMT) and began playing martial music to announce the start of the second stage of the "Val-Farj-10" operations.

Khurmal-Dujaylah Road Seized

LD161752 Tehran IRNA in English 1742 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Operational Region, March 16, IRNA—Muslim forces of Iran took control of Khurmal-Molaveisi [name as received] road in Al-Sulaymaniayah Province today in the second stage of "Val-Fajr-10" operations. Iranian combatants by seizing Khurmal-Dujaylah road and disconnecting the northern parts of Al-Sulaymaniayah Province from its southern sector, inflicted substantial casualties and losses on enemy military units.

Iran's Muslim combatants are reportedly advancing towards the strategic town of Dujaylah and Darbandikhan pond, and have purged two villages of Tapeh Kelari [place name as received] and Haji Roq'a (placename as received] of Iraqi troops. The attacking combatants have also laid siege on Dujaylah from three axes and the 1st Commando Brigade of Iraq's 1st Corps has also been besieged by Iranian forces.

2d Phase of "Val-Fajr 10"

LD161749 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Communique by the Khatam ol-Anbiya' Headquarters, the operations center for the IRGC and the Armed Forces, on the "second phase of 'Val-Fajr-10' operations," issued on 16 March]

[Text] O you Muslim and honorable Iranian ummah. Your warrior children, resistant ummah, having achieved all their predetermined objectives in the first phase of the "Val-Fajr 10" operations, which resulted in the liberation of the strategic city of Khurmal, began the second phase of these operations at 1430 today. The sacrificers of the IRGC Ground Forces in this operational phase moved forward in an area west of the city of Khurmal toward the eastern side of the Darband Khan Swamp and managed to liberate dozens of Kurdish villages in Al-Sulaymaniyah Province. The villages of (Tappah Kalari), (Hajji Rasteh), (Khat-e Tuteh), and Tappah Kal are among the villages liberated in this phase of "Val-Fajr-10" operations.

As a result of the liberation of these villages, communications between the southern and northern part of the Iraqi Province of Al-Sulaymaniyah have been severed and the important and strategic city of (Dozangeh), currently under seige by the warriors of Islam, is about to fall. A number of enemy units, including the 1st Commando Battalion of the 1st Corps, are surrounded by the defenders of Islam. In continuation of this phase of operations, another 2,000 enemy personnel were either annihilated or wounded, thus bringing the number of enemy losses since the start of the operations to more than 3,100. In addition, more than 700 more mercenary Ba'thist personnel have been captured and the number of Iraqi prisoners transferred behind the fronts has reached 1,200.

Progress toward other predetermined objectives, while strengthening liberated positions, continues in full force.

[Signed] Khatam ol-Anbiya' Headquarters

Air, Missile Strikes Kill 32

LD161809 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Continuing its criminal acts in attacking the residential areas of Iran, the Zionist regime of Iraq this afternoon mounted air strikes on the cities of Tabriz, Shiraz, and Bakhtaran. It also mounted a missile strike on Tehran. As a result of these attacks 32 of our compatriots were martyred and a number have sustained injuries.

4 Iraqi Missiles Hit Dezful

LD161854 Tehran IRNA in English 1847 GMT 16 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 16, IRNA—Four Iraqi missiles hit residential areas in Dezful, Khuzestan Province this afternoon. Immediate reports on casualties were not available. Relief workers rushed to the area to rescue victims. In another development, Abdanan District in Ilam was hit by enemy planes this afternoon as a result of which 20 civilians were martyred and some others wounded. A number of houses were also destroyed in the attack.

3d Stage of 'Val-Fajr-10'

LD170625 Tehran IRNA in English 0623 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Operational Theater, March 17, IRNA—Iran's Muslim combatants launched the third phase of the "Val-Fajr-10" operations on several axes in Khurmal region, northeastern Iraq, at dawn Thursday. Iranian forces are advancing towards their pre-determined targets in Halabjah region in Al-Sulaymaniyah. More details will follow soon.

Town of Dujaylah 'Liberated'

LD170618 Tehran IRNA in English 0615 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 17, IRNA—Muslim combatants of Iran liberated the town of Dujaylah, Al-Sulaymaniyah Province, Wednesday night. The Muslim combatants in the second phase of "Val-Fajr-10" operations completely destroyed a commando brigade of First Iraqi Corps and other forces in Dujaylah and purged it of Iraqi Ba'thists. Dujaylah with 20,000 inhabitants lies in Southeastern Khurmal.

Battle for Dujaylah Described

NC170830 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0721 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Unscheduled announcement]]

[Text] O noble and heroic Iranian nation! Please pay attention to this report on the liberation of the city of Dujaylah in Iraq. After liberating the city of Khurmal and establishing complete control over more than 300 square km of Iraqi territory, the triumphant IRGC Ground Forces launched an extensive operational maneuver. They moved from north to south through the operational sector. After crossing natural and man-made barriers, including (Suren's) snow covered heights Nos 2,200 and 2,300, which are difficult to cross, they continued to advance toward the center of the enemy lines and crushed the last bastion of the enemy's resistance in the southern area of Khurmal and east of Dujaylah. They destroyed 100 percent of the 1st Commando Brigade of the 4th Corps, the 68th Brigade of the Special Forces, the 1st National Defense [Defa' al-Watani] Battalion, the 2d and 3d Battalions of the 433d Brigade, and the armored (?Al-Tayb) Battalion from the 18th Infantry Division of the criminal Iraqi Armed Forces. They also destroyed 80 percent of the enemy's 7th National Defense Battalion and the 25th Guards Battalion.

Following this fierce battle, the city of Dujaylah and 20 surrounding villages were liberated and the flag of the Islamic fighters was flown over them. During this phase of the operations, more than 2,500 members of the enemy troops were killed or wounded. In addition, more than 1,000 members of the Iraqi Ba'thist Armed Forces were captured by the forces of Islam during the second phase of the "Val Fajr-10" operations and during the liberation of the city of Dujaylah.

In the course of the "Val Fajr-10" operations, led by the valorour and skilled commanders of the combat units of the IRGC Ground Forces and the Basijis' relentless battle, the main Al-Sulaymaniyah highway to the province's southern cities was taken, thus severing the link between the northern and southern portions of the province. We hope the prayers of the patient and noble Iranian Islamic nation will accompany the brave defenders of the Islamic revolution.

Operations in Khurmal Area

LD170754 Tehran IRNA in English 0750 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Operational Theater, March 17, IRNA—Iran's Muslim combatants liberated the northeastern Iraqi town of Dujaylah and 20 nearby villages in Al-Sulaymaniyah Province Thursday morning killing and wounding 2,500 more enemy soldiers and capturing over 1,000 others. During the second-stage of the "Val-Fajr-10" operations, launched Wednesday afternoon, Iranian combatants also took control of the main road connecting Al-Sulaymaniyah city to the southern cities of the province. The total area liberated in northeastern Iraq since the start of the "Val-Fajr-10" operations Tuesday night exceeded 300 square kms.

Iranian forces after crossing arduous 'Suren' Heights and Heights 2200 and 2300 in the region crushed the last resistance of Iraqi troops south of Khurmal and east of Dujaylah.

During the operations, the attacking forces wiped out some units of the First Iraqi Commando Brigade of the 4th Corps, Special Brigade 68, the 1st Civil Defence Battalion, the 2nd and 3rd Battalions of Brigade 433, and Al-Tayyib Armoured Brigade of the 18th Infantry Division. They also destroyed the 7th Iraqi 'National Defence' Battalion and Battalion 25 by 80 percent. With the start of the third stage of the "Val-Fajr-10" operations at dawn Thursday, the naval personnel of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps (IRGC) in unprecedented amphibious operations crossed Al-Sirvan and Zimkan Rivers, attacking the heart of the enemy positions over the strategic Balambo Heights.

Air Force Bombs Kuysanjaq City

NC170639 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0623 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Unscheduled announcement]

[Text] Esteemed listeners. According to the Joint Staff Command of the Islamic Republic's Armed Forces, the courageous Air Force pilots of the Islamic Republic's Armed Forces, your noble offspring, O combatant nation, in vengeance for the blood of the martyrs of Abdanan in Ilam, carried out separate, intensive bombing missions with their fighter bombers on the economic-military installations of the city of Kuysanjaq in Iraq's Irbil Province at 0806 [0424 GMT] this morning. After inflicting heavy losses on the enemy, all returned safely to their bases.

Iraqi Targets in Dahuk Bombed

LD171024 Tehran IRNA in English 1007 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 17, IRNA—Iranian jet fighters heavily bombed Iraqi military and economic installations of Al-'Amadiyah (Dahuk prov.), at 11:16 hours

local time (07:46 GMT) Thursday to avenge the blood of civilians martyred in Iraqi bombing of Abdanan (Ilam Province) and Bakhtaran. The Joint Staff Command of the Armed Forces said the Iranian jet fighters struck at enemy positions and armored vehicles in "Val-Fajr-10" operational theater at 09:25, 10:20 and 10:45 hours local time (05:55, 06:50 and 07:15 GMT), today. All aircraft returned to bases safely after carrying out their missions.

Bombing Raids on Iraqi Sites

LD170827 Tehran IRNA in English 0814 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Operational Region, March 17, IRNA—Iranian jet fighters in eight separate missions Thursday heavily bombed Iraqi fortifications and troop concentration sites in "Val-Fajr-10" operational theater, northeastern Iraq and on Al-Faw-Basra axis. The fighters returned safely to bases after successfully carrying out the bombing missions which occurred at 07:30, 08:00, 08:25, 09:00, 09:20, 09:25, 10:20 and 10:45 hours local time (04:00, 04:30, 04:55, 05:30, 05:50, 05:55, 06:50 and 07:15 GMT).

2 Missiles Fired at Al-Zubayr

LD170856 Tehran IRNA in English 0849 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Tehran, March 17, IRNA—Twelve Iranian surface-to-surface missiles were fired at economic and military centers of the Iraqi city of Al-Zubayr Wednesday night and Thursday morning in revenge for the savage Iraqi air attack on a hospital in Shiraz, Fars Province yesterday. Over the same period, Iranian long range artillery pounded military and industrial centers of Basra, Al-Qadir, Al-Qurnah, Qal'at Salih, Al-Kesareh [spelling as received] and Al-Majjar al-Kabir.

Strategic Balambo Heights Taken

LD170838 Tehran IRNA in English 0830 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Operational Region, March 17, IRNA—Iran's Muslim combatants captured the strategic heights of Balambo north of Ab-Sirvan [spelling as received] river in northeastern Iraq Thursday morning in continuation of the third stage of the "Val-Fajr-10" operations. Iranian forces by destroying all enemy bases in the region are now stationed on the heights overlooking several villages in southern Al-Sulaymaniyah including Boyn, Rashaw and Shera.

Iraqi Major General Captured

LD170911 Tehran IRNA in English 0757 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Operational Region, March 17, IRNA—Commander of Iraqi Infantry Division 43 Major General 'Ali Husayn Obayd al-Alqawi is among the POWS captured during the liberation of the northeastern Iraqi town of Dujaylah in Al-Sulaymaniyah Province this morning. Hundreds of Iraqi officers and NCOs were killed or wounded and over 1,000 other enemy troops captured during the second stage of the "Val-Fajr-10" operations which resulted in liberation of Dujaylah and 200 nearby villages.

2 Planes Downed Near Khurmal

LD170727 Tehran IRNA in English 0724 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Operational Theater, March 17, IRNA—Two Iraqi warplanes were shot down by Iranian anti-aircraft fire in the "Val-Fajr-10" operational region in Khurmal region, northeastern Iraq, at 07:58 and 08:11 hours local time (04:28 and 04:41 GMT) Wednesday. The enemy warplanes were destroyed in the air, killing their pilots.

Another Iraqi Plane Shot Down

LD170908 Tehran IRNA in English 0847 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Operational Region, March 17, IRNA—Another Iraqi warplane attempting to bomb Iranian positions in this war theater was shot down by Iranian anti-aircraft fire at 11:16 hours local time (07:46 GMT) Thursday. This brings to three the number of Iraqi warplanes downed in the "Val-Fajr-10" operations in northeastern Iraq since Thursday morning.

Iraqi Plane Downed Over Tabriz

LD170906 Tehran IRNA in English 0817 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Tabriz, East Azarbayjan Prov., March 17, IRNA—An Iraqi warplane was shot down by Iranian anti-aircraft fire at 10:48 hours local time (07:18 GMT) Thursday during an enemy air attack on this northwestern city. Residential areas of Tabriz sustained some damage in the Iraqi bombardment.

Industrial Plants Captured

LD171040 Tehran IRNA in English 1031 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Operational Region, March 17, IRNA—Iran's Muslim forces liberated some Iraqi industrial plants located between Dujaylah town and north of Halabjah city in Al-Sulaymiyah Province Thursday in continuation of the third stage of the "Val-Fajr-10" operations. Hundreds of Iraqi soldiers were killed and wounded during the liberation of the Iraqi plants by Iranian combatants. The attacking forces also laid siege on Halabjah military garrison today and their heavy artillery fire on the enemy garrison, killed or wounded scores of Ba'thist troops and destroyed over 200 tanks and armoured personnel carriers.

Iraqi Casualties Exceed 5,500

LD171132 Tehran IRNA in English 1116 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Excerpt] Operational Region, March 17, IRNA—The number of Iraqi soldiers killed and wounded in this operational theater since the start of the "Val-Fajr-10" operations Tuesday night exceeded 5,500. Some 2,050 Iraqi soldiers, officers and NCOs have so far been captured and transferred behind the war zone during the victorious "Val-Fajr-10" operations launched by Iran's Muslim combatants in Al-Sulaymaniyah Province, northeastern Iraq. [passage omitted]

Gezeel Heights 'Liberated'

LD171001 Tehran IRNA in English 0945 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Operational Region, March 17, IRNA—Iran's Muslim forces in continuation of the third stage of the "Val-Fajr-10" operations crossed Ab-Layeh [name as received] river in southern Al-Sulaymaniyah Province Thursday, liberating Gezeel [name as received] heights overlooking scores of villages near Halabjah. On another axis, Iranian combatants by capturing Balambo chain of mountains including heights 1463, 1483, 1466, 1398, 1302, 1602, 1453, 1159, 1078 and 1022 liberated eight more villages in the region. According to the latest reports, the Muslim combatants of Iran have moved from west of Dujaylah town towards Darbandikhan Lake and stationed on the shore of the lake.

'Strategic' Garrison Captured

LD170945 Tehran IRNA in English 0940 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Operational Region, March 17, IRNA—The Muslim forces of Iran continued their advance on Dujaylah-Halabjah axis, in Al-Sulaymaniyah Province, Thursday, liberating 12 more villages. Iranian combatants also surrounded and then seized the strategic garrison of Zamqi [name as received] on Dujaylaha-Halabjah axis after a few-hour battle with the Ba'thist troops.

Halabjah 'Chemically Bombed'

LD171044 Tehran IRNA in English 1027 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Operational Region, March 17, IRNA—The Iraqi regime totally disappointed because of the repeated defeats suffered by its forces in this war theater, chemically bombed Halabjah town in Al-Sulaymaniyah Province twice Wednesday evening. Iraqi warplanes dropped chemical bombs on the defenceless women and children living in Halabjah yesterday, killing and wounding hundreds of them. Following the Iraqi chemical bombardment, thousands of residents of Halabjah and surrounding areas left their homes in groups Thursday morning and walked towards the western Iranian border lines.

At 09:30 hours local time (06:00 GMT) today, the enemy again deployed chemical weapons in the "Val-Fajr-10" operational theater in a bid to hinder the advance of Iran's Muslim combatants.

Troops Advancing on Halabjah

LD171302 Tehran IRNA in English 1256 GMT 17 Mar 88

[Text] Val-Fajr-10 Operational Theater, March 17, IRNA—Iran's Muslim combatants are advancing on the beseiged northeastern Iraqi city of Halabjah from several points, say last minute reports from the operational theatre. Simultaneous with the advance of the liberating forces Halabjah residents are fighting the hard-pressed Ba'thist troops inside and have killed and wounded several of them. Local residents are jubilantly accompanying the Muslim forces to the city.

The Ba'thist regime after its severe defeats in the region yet again resorted to the dastardly use of chemical bombs on Khurmal, Dujaylah and Halabjah wounding many Iraqi civilians. Iranian forces are now evacuating the chemically wounded civilians behind the frontlines.